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**A Life in Music:
the contribution of John Ritchie (1921-2014)
to the Christchurch musical community as a
composer, performer, educator and administrator.**

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy in Music
at
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by
JULIE ANNE JOHNSON



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Abstract

This thesis is a study of the life of New Zealand composer John Ritchie (1921-2014) from his ancestry and early years, and his development throughout formative teenage years to adulthood. Interviews conducted with Ritchie himself were a significant part of the primary research for the study, and, in conjunction with existing documents and personal papers, reveal a biography in which the musical aspects of Ritchie's life are highlighted. Participant interviews with people associated professionally with Ritchie, as well as Ritchie family members, provide supporting evidence and a diversity of further views.

Ritchie's early and later years are each portrayed as parts of a linear story. The middle years are covered in a series of chapters that deal with the substance of his musical and academic life. These sections follow a separate chronological path that allows the provision of greater detail about Ritchie's creative, administrative and educational work. Cameo biographies of other participants are interspersed into the story as they appear in a part of Ritchie's life, in themselves a separate thread that offers a vignette of each individual. Participant interviews were transcribed and the material integrated to fit the chronology.

The final chapters detail Ritchie's later years as he continued to compose and his works were regularly performed. Awards and acknowledgement of his long service to the University of Canterbury, his widespread contribution to music in Christchurch and New Zealand, and the successful outcome of establishing the John Ritchie String Orchestra are outlined. An analysis of Ritchie's orchestral work *Papanui Road*, together with consideration of its biographical elements, completes the study.

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Chloe Moon, by way of introduction from Ritchie, became a cherished friend as well as providing a singular view of Ritchie and his music. Her sensitive and direct manner in discussing musical matters enabled me to view Ritchie's life and music subjectively. I acknowledge her musical expertise in all areas, and particularly in discussions about Ritchie's music, especially *Papanui Road*, with great appreciation. I honour her longstanding association with Ritchie which fortuitously saw her drive him each Saturday to the City café for morning tea where we met.

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Name Conventions

Names of the Ritchie family members, participants and other key persons in the thesis are stated in full, first and last name, in the first instance. The middle name of John Ritchie's father, also John Ritchie, is included in the first statement to avoid confusion. Subsequent mentions are as follows:

1. John Ritchie is referred to as Ritchie.
2. Ritchie's immediate family are referred to by their first given name without abbreviation.
3. Ritchie's father, John Thain Ritchie, is referred to as John Thain.
4. Other family members are referred to by their first given name, or first and last name when needed for clarification; for instance when the first given name is the same as another person or they are only mentioned occasionally.
5. Participants are referred to by their surname.
6. Married names are used where applicable.
7. Other persons are referred to by their surname or both names when needed for clarification; for instance when the surname is the same as another person or they are only mentioned occasionally.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background to the study

John Ritchie (1921-2014) was New Zealand's most senior living composer during most of the time period that this study was being researched. Born in the tumultuous years of post World War One New Zealand, his life spanned the 1930s Depression and the Second World War before peacetime allowed a relatively settled and conventional existence. In 1921 New Zealand, radio was in its infancy and the average inhabitant's experience of music was at home around the piano or gramophone, at church, in concert halls, and at school where group singing was encouraged. 'Serious' music in the form of choral societies, orchestral music and opera was enjoyed by member musicians and interested audiences from the middle of the nineteenth century but composition of Western art music in New Zealand took considerably longer to establish. The country was not without a number of active musician composers who had emigrated from England but they continued to compose in the tradition they had come from.¹ Australian-born Alfred Hill (1869-1960), who was active in the field around the turn of the century, is acknowledged as New Zealand's sole major composer during this period and it was several years before composition progressed further.² As it transpired, Ritchie was one of a group of men and women born in various cities and towns around the country in the second and third decades of the twentieth century from whom New Zealand's own art music would emerge.

I first became aware of John Ritchie as a composer when I was a member of two local amateur choirs in Christchurch: the Hagley Singers, a community SATB choir which operated as an enrolled course of the evening community classes at Hagley College; and during the 1990s a women-only group, the Cecilian Singers. Both choirs performed regularly throughout the year and I can recall singing John Ritchie choral pieces at recitals which Ritchie sometimes attended. In particular, I

¹ Thomson, John Mansfield, *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 215.

² Thomson, p. 217.

recollect performing two of his Christmas carols: *How far is it to Bethlehem?* (1967) and *Let Christians All* (1997) with the Hagley Singers, and the song cycle *Canary Wine* with the Cecilians.

Several years later, while I was in the final stages of my composition studies at the University of Canterbury, circumstances brought me into direct contact with Ritchie. Saturday morning was habitually spent with my husband and our young daughter at a central Christchurch café followed by a visit to the public library close by. I noticed that this was also the routine of Ritchie and his friend, musician and composer Chloe Moon. I recognised Ritchie immediately but my natural reserve and view of his elevated status in Christchurch curbed any approach to him and the interaction between our groups initially was limited to smiling acknowledgement in our shared custom. Eventually I plucked up courage and introduced myself to him as a music student and soon our two parties were coalescing for morning tea.



Figure 1: John Ritchie and Chloe Moon at the city café, December 2008. Photograph by Brent Johnson.

My knowledge of Ritchie's non-composing activities was limited, but his affable, approachable manner aroused my curiosity and imagination. It has been said that

‘The first choice you need to make in the research process is to decide what captures your imagination and “turns you on”’.³ The idea that his life should be documented and studied was born.

My interest in people’s life stories had been piqued while researching for an ethnomusicology paper in 2005. This focussed on an organological study of a set of new Balinese instruments the University of Canterbury had recently acquired, and the project incorporated interviewing a Balinese music specialist. The interviews were aimed at gaining knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the instruments. This included the materials used to construct them, the type of music that would be played on them, when and where the music would be performed and for what occasion. As well, I needed to be informed about the musicians’ training and expertise, music teachers and education, festivals and customs, as well as the specialist’s own background as a Balinese musician and teacher. Understanding the lives of the people in context was crucial to understanding the instruments’ use; responses to set questions were often not simple or ‘right’ and further querying revealed new information and a deeper understanding and clarification of the topic. It was during these interviews that I discovered a passion for enquiring and hearing about others’ lives.

A study focussing on Ritchie’s life and music appeared to be an appropriate approach to take to this many-sided musician, in part because Ritchie’s compositional output was the most transparent aspect of his life. I was drawn to composition because of my own involvement in it and to Ritchie’s music specifically because of my experience and enjoyment of performing his works previously. I was also interested in whether some insight could be gained into the workings of a composing mind by studying the composer and his music closely – perhaps as much to comprehend how I formalised my own musical ideas as Ritchie’s. As the study progressed I learned that composing was just one of many facets to Ritchie’s life. He had spent, and seemingly enjoyed, much of his time in

³ *Qualitative Research for Allied Health Professionals: Challenging Choices*, ed. by Linda Finlay and Claire Ballinger (Chichester: Whurr Publishers, 2006), p. 31.

a range of activities, and his leadership in these areas appeared to have influenced the direction of music in the Canterbury community: composition, education, direction and performance, administration, critical and informative writing, adjudication, and community participation.

It was also noticeable from the data collected during interviews with other participants that many individuals relayed and discussed the non-composing elements of Ritchie's life in greater detail than his musical works and thus a more inclusive approach was presenting itself. Participants generally talked about their own involvement with Ritchie; for instance a performer centred mostly on Ritchie's conducting, while university colleagues focussed on his academic involvement. Additionally, Ritchie's compositions in the Canterbury music scene were not necessarily perceived as being of greater importance than any other component of his musical life at the time. Ritchie himself was more reticent when asked about his compositions than other music topics. So, much as I wanted to find the secrets of how he composed and where his ideas came from, Ritchie himself was not able to provide those answers other than in a purely pragmatic way in terms of working within the parameters of commissions, and the instruments and particular ensembles he was composing for.

As Ritchie approached his ninetieth year, preparations got underway in Christchurch to acknowledge and celebrate his life and music. Discussions around the festivities took place amongst Christchurch's musical directors and managers. The proposals put forward included a special concert dedicated to John Ritchie compositions. Ritchie himself was consulted and I was present while he compiled a list of works he deemed suitable for such a programme. He worked quickly, thinking out loud, dismissing a work after the briefest of consideration, then instantly approving another. His extraordinary single-mindedness gave me an insight into his ability to negotiate his working life. He asked for my thoughts on his selection and, surprisingly to me, gave me the opportunity to advance my own recommendations. At the time, he was lying ill in bed at his home in Christchurch, New Zealand, suffering from heart failure. His condition had resulted in fluid collecting around his heart and lungs, throughout his body and down his legs. I

wondered if he would in fact survive to be a nonagenarian but his enthusiasm and good spirits were infectious. I delved into his composition record book and engaged in a discussion with him (see Appendix F).⁴

It was then just over four years since I had first met Ritchie at his home to discuss researching his life and music. University of Canterbury music lecturer, Dr Brian Pritchard, who I had met recently, was instrumental in providing me with topics that would be judicious to cover in my submitted proposal to the University of Waikato and I asked Ritchie for his thoughts on each of these. I remember Ritchie as being very clear and confident, and extremely helpful, even going so far as to collect some supporting material, including his catalogue of works, from his study to show me. I was immediately excited by both his attentiveness and his attention to record keeping. It was that moment that propelled me onto the path which the thesis would eventually take although it was some time before this became clear and was subsequently ratified. In retrospect, I can see that the methods I used from the outset – semi-structured and unstructured interviews with a central figure which took place over an extended period of time supported by primary data – are those which align with biography, life history, oral history and life story. Accordingly, the central research question and focus of the my inquiries were adjusted as work proceeded, in order to reflect the growing understanding I had of how the topic of John Ritchie’s musical life and contribution to the Canterbury region really needed to be approached, which at core was biographical.

Once regular meeting times and recorded interviews were established between us, I quickly learned that Ritchie was engaged in a variety of musical activities in which he featured prominently. Additionally, I had assumed a life born of privilege and was both surprised and intrigued when it became evident that this was far from the case. As the research progressed it became clear to me that in order to determine Ritchie’s contribution in music, the first priority was to delve into his life and personal circumstances and attempt to ascertain how accidents of

⁴ Ritchie documented not only compositions but recordings, publications, written articles, book reviews, and broadcast talks although the author has not determined if all of these lists are complete.

experience and events in Ritchie's early and professional life helped shape his views on composition, performance and music education. As I fleshed out his biography, the particular circumstances which determined an outcome for Ritchie, and the intertwining of Ritchie's various roles together with his association with others, became the significant threads which determined the direction the study would ultimately take. Ritchie was not solely a composer who was simply fulfilling his obligations as lecturer at the University of Canterbury. Even though his knowledge, delivery and student support were clearly outstanding, he increasingly immersed himself in music education and academic administration, broadened the scope of his engagement with practical music, critiqued, addressed and chaired on a number of musical (and other) matters, and initiated and led musical ventures which went far beyond the confines of his university position, all the while scoring a large number of arrangements and composing new works. His was, indeed, a life in music.

Methodologies: Storied Lives: Biography, Oral History, Life Story, Life History and Narrative Inquiry

While music history, music historiography or musical biography initially presented as probable methodologies, I determined that a solely historical perspective which reported on the musical aspects of Ritchie's life only from material accessible in archives would jeopardise the essential element that existed in my originally proposed research: the 'aliveness' of Ritchie himself, a living composer. I was keen too, to research a life in context, rather than writing an extensive analytical investigation of the subject's compositions. In-depth interviews would provide the narration and detailing of personal experiences – his 'take' on those events. Ritchie had lived a long life and was in relatively good health physically and mentally when the project began. He was willing to accommodate my research aims by entering into the long-term researcher-participant relationship and we agreed that our interaction would not negatively affect our individual personal circumstances or other relationships.

This study aligns with the key characteristics of qualitative research: the researcher's direct engagement with people in their own environment; multiple forms of data collection such as interviews, observation, and archival material which can include a range of documents, both text and pictorial; flexibility within the research plan to allow the data to direct the investigation ('emergent design'); and an understanding that the researcher's personal history and interpretation are intertwined with the research.⁵ In *Life History Research*, Samuel considers that while participants tell their story(ies), it is the researcher who defines the scope in their selection and ordering of the material from the interview data to create a narrative. The researcher's bias is inherent in the inquiry since she is both the creator of the research plan and the interpreter of the data from her own perspective.⁶ Further, this 'representation of life' is only 'one glimpse in through the window'.⁷

The terms storied lives, biography, oral history, life story, life history and narrative inquiry have overlapping interpretations and associated methods applied to them but common to all is the centrality of the individual's lived experience. A life history is 'a form of biographical writing' constructed by the researcher as told to them by the studied person.⁸ The researcher seeks to understand the importance of factors from the participant's perspective and surrounding social, political, personal and historical factors are considered by the researcher so that the 'life story' is able to be viewed from a broader perspective. Thus, a life history is a joint researcher-researched approach which situates narrated stories in context.

'Oral history is the recording of personal testimony delivered in oral form'.⁹ While it can refer to the taped memoir, the type-written manuscript and the research method that involves in-depth interviewing, it is in reference to the

⁵ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd edn (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2003), pp. 179-183.

⁶ *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. by Lisa M. Given (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2008), pp. 60-61.

⁷ *Life History Research: Epistemology, Methodology and Representation*, ed. by Rubby Dhunpath and Michael Samuel (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2009), p. 4.

⁸ Creswell, p. 234.

⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

recorded in-depth interview that it is frequently, and in this study, used. A life story is described as a 'personal account in the teller's own words'.¹⁰ Dependent on recollection and selection of detail, certain facts surrounding the event may be omitted and the account may consist of some 'story telling' or fiction. For the purposes of this study, life stories contained within the recorded interviews are treated as data used in the creation of the life history.

Life history research often uses in-depth interviews as its primary data source. These interviews are a process whereby the researcher and participant co-construct the participant's life events through dialogue and, as is the case in this inquiry, are likely to take place over a long period of time. This study contains these distinct life history characteristics, in particular the use of in-depth interviews that took place over several years. From the initial interview in which a number of questions were prepared and posed to Ritchie to the conversational style discussions which progressed over time, the resultant material was then examined and shaped in terms of its musical and cultural context. Available hard data such as personal documents and institutional archives were studied, thus providing supporting evidence to the final narrative.

Barbour notes that throughout the period of the researcher-participant relationship, it is probable that participants may 'give voice' to some events or experiences for the first time.¹¹ This might result in the participant changing their previously held internal perception of that event as the story unfolds. The participant may also recount stories several times in which the researcher is aware that with each retelling, variations of the events occur. This focus on experiences as told by the participant in conversation with the researcher, and the researcher's interpretation of those events, is what gives life history its unique quality. Notwithstanding that life history research presents one account of a person's life, one of the challenges of life history research is to recognise that the narrative will not necessarily

¹⁰ *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, ed. by Bridget Somekh and Cathy Lewin (London: Sage Publication, 2005), p. 156.

¹¹ Rosaline S. Barbour, *Introducing Qualitative Research: A Student's Guide to the Craft of Doing Qualitative Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2008), pp. 123-124.

provide the type of chronological account that the researcher might expect. Ritchie's reluctance to talk about or expand on certain personal events in his life, and a general disinclination to discuss in detail his compositions caused me early on in the interviewing process to ponder the original objective of the study. The outcome of these deliberations resulted in a life history which reflects the amount of detail and attributed value of subject matter that Ritchie provided during the interviews.

The term narrative, like oral history, and consistent with other debates within the literature, has been defined and used in differing ways. It can denote the completed 'story', a research approach, a method or, more generally, any oral or written account.¹² In this sense, all participant interviews in this study could be described as narratives although a more limited definition is generally proposed within the research. Somekh distinguishes narrative from story by describing narrative as being the researcher's written or oral portrayal of an original story, or even the storyteller's observations of his original story.¹³ In other words, narrative may be defined as the recounting of an original story. In this study, I understand the term narrative in its generally accepted way to describe my own accounts constructed from the interviews and other data. This includes references to shorter storied events or experiences contained within the body of the thesis as well as to the completed life history study.

'What does this narrative or story reveal about the person from which it came? How can this narrative be interpreted so that it provides an understanding of and illuminates the life and culture that created it?'.¹⁴ In distinguishing the various theoretical perspectives within qualitative research, Patton asks these foundational questions in relation to narratology or narrative analysis. Patton suggests that narrative studies were informed and influenced by hermeneutics – traditionally the study of interpretation of written texts - and phenomenology – the study of lived

¹² Pranee Liamputtong, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 3rd edn (Victoria, Australia: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 110-111.

¹³ Somekh and Lewin, p. 29.

¹⁴ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd edn (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2002), p. 115.

experience as told by people directly - and that these 'stories' provide a particularly clear view to understanding society because they emanate from those who experience it.¹⁵ Narrative inquiry, therefore, which encompasses oral history, life story, life history and in fact any 'narrative', focuses on the meaning of the experiences and life events as relayed by the participant(s) rather than thinking of the events simply as chronicled data. Narrative inquiry features amongst many disciplines with varying approaches and methods with one commonality, best described as 'all revolving around an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by the one who lives them'.¹⁶ This description aptly describes the focus of this study inasmuch as Ritchie provided the core material, relaying life events from his perspective, during the many interviews conducted over several years.

Constructing a Life History through Narrative

The commonly accepted definition of 'construct' is 'to build' and it is in this sense that the word is used here. However, it is worth noting that elements of the constructivist-interpretive paradigm as referred to in qualitative research literature are present in this thesis. Constructivism refers to a particular approach which recognises subjective realities and multiple meanings: 'The constructivist epistemological stance accepts that there are multiple ways of understanding/knowing the world that are always constituted and contextually dependent'.¹⁷

Whilst agreeing that the constructionist acknowledges 'multiple realities', it is interesting to note that Somekh and Lewin's definition of constructivism aligns it with its origin: 'Constructivism is the term used to describe a theory of knowledge which stresses the active process involved in building knowledge' (my

¹⁵ Patton, pp. 115-118.

¹⁶ *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 3rd edn (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005), p. 651.

¹⁷ Lynn Butler-Kisber, *Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative and Arts-Informed Perspectives* (London: Sage Publications, 2010), p. 7.

underline).¹⁸ This contrasts with the positivist approach that assumes that knowledge exists and that it can be accessed by collecting and analysing data.¹⁹ As stated, I use the term narrative in its more narrow sense as defined within the literature. Ritchie's accounts of his earlier life events and personal experiences provided 'factual' information (data) related to his life in terms of chronology, relationships and life experiences. Certain details of these events such as dates and places were then verified by accessing information contained in personal documents, archival material and by the accounts of other participants. The interviews contained more than a chronology of a life; however the individual events were retold in a particular way that reflected aspects of Ritchie and the other participants, and their interpretation of those experiences as well as expressing feelings and views retrospectively about the events. In listening to the audio recordings and re-reading each transcript, my aim was to understand the experiences from the participant's perspective.

In conjunction with the timeline of events, and of particular importance in the construction of narrative in the context of narrative inquiry, as a researcher I needed to interpret the meaning that was attributed to the events by the participants and by doing so learn about Ritchie's life and indeed of all those being studied and the world in which they lived. What can we understand of the motives that lay behind Ritchie's decisions that affected and reshaped music in Canterbury? What part, if any, did his musical education, his childhood, his parentage or even his ancestry play in determining his choices and preferences? Which of these choices seemed to help determine future behaviour and patterning that shaped his life and altered the lives of those he was in contact with? What was the particular set of circumstances that propelled Ritchie to music, to Christchurch and its university, and to the wider musical community? What role did the society in which he lived play in contributing to the outcomes?

¹⁸ Somekh and Lewin, p. 344.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 347.

The resulting life history therefore was determined by the stories participants told and the way in which they relayed them to me, and the manner in which I used all available data to present the narrative. It constitutes an attempt to understand and present these particular aspects as lived by Ritchie within the framework of his academic, performing and composing life, and the wider musical and general community which he inhabited and in which he participated. I am aware that in the field of music in New Zealand, such an approach to academic writing may in some quarters be considered outside the norm. I struggled in the early part of the research to make sense of the interview process as merely a tool to gather information which would simply be used as a means to validate, add to, or support existing archival material. Digging deeper into complexities of research methodologies and the various theories of biographical writing, helped to shape a way forward that seemed both critically self-aware but also practical for the task at hand.

Literature review

New Zealand's earliest music was that of the Māori who, it is thought, arrived around one thousand years ago, from whence the exact location is unknown but likely to be Eastern Polynesia.²⁰ Fundamental to their lives was the people's musical traditions which included chants and dance, used within their social context for a variety of ritualistic purposes such as welcomes, spells and warfare.²¹ When the Europeans settled in New Zealand in the early eighteenth century, they brought with them their own cultural identity and associated activities including the Western art music tradition. The music of the original inhabitants was largely ignored – certainly it was not embraced or absorbed into the new people's lives. Instead, along with all other aspects of the European settlers' culture, Western music was disseminated into New Zealand's population, where it forged a dominant position in mainstream society. It is this musical tradition within which Ritchie's life was centred and with which this study is engaged.

²⁰ Mervyn McLean, *Maori Music* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1996), p. 10.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-33.

Colonised New Zealand is thus comparatively young, yet old enough for its Western musical history and the individuals who traversed their way to a musical life to be explored as a means of understanding later developments, and the significance and influence on today's music and musicians. While Australian born Alfred Hill (1869-1960) was New Zealand's first professional composer, by the early twentieth century the country was spawning its own talented composers following a period of intense musical performance, the most important of whom is widely recognised as Douglas Lilburn (1915-2001). Lilburn is described variously as 'father of New Zealand composition'²² and the 'grandfather of New Zealand music',²³ which begs the question: who and what has followed? More pertinent to my study, who were the 'brothers and sisters' who negotiated a different albeit important path in twentieth-century New Zealand and helped shape aspects of their country's music?

Of the musical life studies undertaken in New Zealand to date, Philip Norman's extensive doctoral thesis (and later his book) on Douglas Lilburn is the most detailed and well-known.²⁴ Norman's thesis was presented in three parts consisting of a detailed chronological life and music study in context from which conclusions were drawn in relation to Lilburn's importance to the origin and development of a New Zealand art music. Specifically, part one documents Lilburn's life from birth to retirement, part two is an examination of thirty works composed between 1940 and 1965, while part three presents a summary of the findings. Norman's interviews with Lilburn and others provided details related to family background, life events and relationships, while his music was assimilated into the study along with material from library archives, newspapers, programmes, radio, sound recordings and journal articles. Of crucial importance was Norman's exploration of Lilburn's status as the pioneer of a New Zealand art music tradition.

²² Philip Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2006), p. 7.

²³ 'Douglas Lilburn: Arranger, Composer, Performer', *SOUNZ: Centre for New Zealand Music Toi te Arapūoru* <<https://www.sounz.org.nz/contributors/1063>> [accessed 16 July 2019].

²⁴ Philip Norman, 'The Beginnings and Development of a New Zealand Music: The Life, and Work (1940-1965), of Douglas Lilburn' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, 1983).

Norman focuses on Lilburn's compositions and places these in context in the first part of his thesis: 'the circumstances surrounding the composition of many of his works are examined'.²⁵

My subject differs from Norman's in fundamental ways but offers a window into the life in context of an important figure in Canterbury. Ritchie could not, by virtue of his age, personal circumstances and his composing style, be considered a 'grand/father of New Zealand music'. Ritchie has been described as a generalist and certainly his musical and administrative experiences in practice were wide-ranging.²⁶ For a myriad of reasons, Ritchie was not concerned predominantly with composing in terms of time spent, nor was he especially interested in the furthering of an identifiably 'New Zealand music' as a compositional genre – if he even believed in such a characterisation. His domestic circumstances consisting of a wife and five children also contrast markedly with Lilburn's 'solitary existence'.²⁷ Unlike Lilburn who owned to having 'a natural propensity for solitude', Ritchie sought the company of others throughout his life, actively participating in social events both musical and non-musical, and engaged in lively debates on a wide range of topics.²⁸ He took a keen interest in sport and enjoyed indulging in his favourite recreational pastime, golf, with colleagues and friends. This difference in life and ambitions between Lilburn and Ritchie, and the consequent difference in attention to composition between them is reflected in the literature available on their respective bodies of creative work, with comparatively little having been published on Ritchie to date.

Similarities to my topic in general terms can be observed in Rachael Hawkey's doctoral thesis on the influential music educator Vernon Griffiths (1894-1985).²⁹ In her conclusion, Hawkey suggests further research, which this study in part

²⁵ Ibid., i.

²⁶ John Jennings, 'Honorary DMus for John Ritchie and Maurice Till', *Chronicle: University of Canterbury*, 11 May 2000, p. 6.

²⁷ Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 336.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 258.

²⁹ Rachael Hawkey, 'Vernon Griffiths (1894-1985): His Life and Philosophy of Music Education as Demonstrated in his Collected Papers' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, 1993).

addresses: 'How many of the students at King Edward sought further involvement in musical activities after leaving school? Did their experiences spur them on to further learning and study, perhaps at a tertiary institution?'.³⁰ Further:

There are striking instances of students of Griffiths [...] who did achieve noted success as musicians and music educators. Two of them are John Ritchie and Frank Callaway. Although the impact of private teaching or study cannot be discounted, neither can their involvement with Griffiths which may even have initiated their earliest interest in music'.³¹

During the interview process, Ritchie clearly acknowledged that his music career was due to the circumstances which led to his attendance at the King Edward Technical College and Griffiths's teaching but spoke little about his later scholastic activities, particularly as it related to the theory of education. Nonetheless, he was a student of Griffiths and followed his path into teacher training while completing composition studies. He was later employed as a lecturer at the University of Canterbury under Griffiths's headship and took over his role as director of both the Addington Workshops Choir and the Liederkränzchen in the early stages of his career. Hawkey focussed on one aspect of Griffiths's work, his life view of music education in society, whereas my study covers a wider range of the subject's activities. Nonetheless, Hawkey's thesis falls into the defined category of biographical method and the present study follows roughly the same methodological path.

Published writings related to Ritchie are limited to short items contained within various music volumes providing certain kinds of information. For example brief biographical entries are found in *International Who's Who in Music and Musicians Directory* (1977), *Bibliography of New Zealand Compositions* (1991), and in John Thompson's *Biographical Dictionary of New Zealand Composers* (1990). The music websites 'SOUNZ', 'Promethean Editions', and 'Trust Records'

³⁰ R. Hawkey, p. 322.

³¹ Ibid., p. 325.

include Ritchie in their list of composers, providing a concise biography, work lists, publications, recordings, and some composer notes relating to selected works.³² Mention of Ritchie can also be found on more general websites of organisations, but these only summarise those activities pertaining to the particular bodies that he was involved in, such as the International Society for Music Education (ISME), and the online newspaper, *NZ Catholic*. John Jennings' history of the University of Canterbury School of Music is more substantial in its aims, outlining Ritchie's role as Professor from 1962-1985 as well as his involvement with the resident ensembles, but naturally the context is mostly confined to machinations within the music school at the time.³³ In 1996 Jennings penned an article for *Music in New Zealand* entitled 'John Ritchie A Profile'.

Philip Norman's radio interviews with Ritchie at age-related events – his seventieth, eightieth, and ninetieth birthday – are an indication of his perceived importance and enduring presence in musical society. Additionally, Norman's Festschrift 'Ritchie at Ninety' is a collection of essays by a number of people (including the present researcher) who wrote from their particular perspectives on Ritchie as their lives intersected his at some point. This gives an insight to the array of people who were affected positively by Ritchie throughout his life. But the Festschrift is not – nor was intended to be – analytical.

Aspects of Ritchie's personal and professional life are detailed in his unpublished scrapbooks (1939-1965) and other personal documents and notebooks. Cassette tape audio recordings and transcripts of interviews conducted by Ritchie's son Anthony (1992) and daughter Jennifer (2002) were available to listen to and read. In particular, this material provides background to Ritchie's early life including

³² 'John Ritchie: Arranger, Composer, Performer', *SOUNZ: Centre for New Zealand Music Toi te Arapūoru* <<https://www.sounz.org.nz/contributors/1083>> [accessed 18 July 2019]; 'John Ritchie', *Promethean Editions* (2015) <<http://www.prometheanedititions.com/php/ComposerSummary.php?CompID=16>> [accessed 18 July 2019]; 'John Ritchie', *Trust Records* (2012) <<http://www.trustcds.com/php/artist.php?ID=50>> [accessed 18 July 2019].

³³ John M. Jennings, *Music at Canterbury: A Centennial history of the School of Music, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand 1891-1991* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury, 1991), pp. 48-66.

his introduction to music instruction at Dunedin Technical College (also known as King Edward Technical College) in 1935. Ritchie's musical experiences at the college could be understood by studying 'An Experiment in School Music-making' published in 1941, since it chronicles the author Vernon Griffiths's music education practices implemented at the college in 1934. It may be argued that Griffiths's philosophy and methodology influenced Ritchie's own views and conventions in his academic career and in his compositions. This view was conveyed to me during the course of my research and certainly John Thomson believed that Ritchie 'was strongly influenced [by Griffiths] towards community music-making'.³⁴

Methods used in the collection of data

Interview Designs and Methods

The use of interviews as a primary method and data source may seem so self-evident that an explanation is superfluous. Mason, however, believes that whilst interviews are a predominant feature of qualitative research generally, this should not preclude the researcher from deliberating and reflecting on the decision to include them in her study.³⁵ She suggests that in the process of selecting particular methods of information gathering, researchers should always consider their reasons for choosing them and what the expected outcomes might be. This will establish a greater understanding of her ontological and epistemological positions.

Mason also advocates the creation of a well-structured and coherent research plan for the research inquiry before any data collection, including interviews, commences 'and these reasons are to do with the value of a good research design for the researcher's own use, and for the coherent and rigorous development of their project'.³⁶ A clear and detailed plan will assist us to choose methods, such as interview type, that is congruent with our inquiry and assist us to construct, arrange, and present questions in ways that are likely to achieve our research aims.

³⁴ Thomson, pp. 152-153.

³⁵ Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, (London: Sage Publications, 1996), p. 39.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Patton has an opposite and, as he states, controversial view that one can interview and analyse data successfully without understanding the philosophical theory inherent in the various paradigms. Patton suggests that it might be easier, for example, for the researcher to understand the philosophy of science once some experience in the field has been acquired.³⁷

I was able to appreciate both of these contradictory views on philosophical considerations at different stages in the research process. I agreed with Patton in that initially I found it impossible to grasp the theory of ontology and epistemology fully before the interview process began. Without practical experience to draw on, I struggled to understand the meaning behind the concepts; however, with some knowledge of interview design, I considered that in-depth interviews were the most appropriate to conduct with Ritchie. I understood that it was important to establish rapport and gain Ritchie's trust and, unlike my interaction with the other participants which took the form of only one (and on occasion two) sessions, I could proceed slowly, firstly asking non-specific questions on topics that were generally known or at least were not personal.

I decided to offer something of myself in a conversational way and talk about my own experiences in music and composing. This enabled me to learn something about the way that Ritchie spoke and how he interacted with me, as well as gathering information on his life and his music. I cautiously began interviewing Ritchie, believing that my interest in Ritchie's life together with my skill at reflexivity would ensure that any material gathered would be worthwhile during those early interviews. They were experimental in the sense that I had not yet established a set method of proceeding either during the interviews (which were loosely planned) or the process of planning that would ensure that Ritchie's 'whole' life would be recorded. I expected that the experience would help clarify aspects of the method I was unsure of and that new ideas would emerge.

³⁷ Patton, p. 69.

Once I had accumulated some practise in interviewing, I revisited Mason's organisational research strategy and retrospectively worked through the ontological and epistemological considerations of the research design process. This was the start of what became a continual reflective deliberating throughout the research process. As I gained access to specific aspects of Ritchie's life, the importance of reflexivity became apparent. Not only did I become aware of how my perspective might influence the research process, I discovered that some of my previously held beliefs about a particular topic were found to be erroneous. The understanding gained from this introspection enabled me to consolidate my interview methods, planning, and analysis.

There are three main interview designs, each used according to the researcher's epistemological stance, the research question and aims, and the type of study undertaken. The terms generally applied to these are structured, semi-structured and unstructured (similarly standardized, semi-standardized and unstandardized).³⁸ Generally the structured interview refers to a predetermined set of questions in a particular order that are put to a number of participants. There is no deviation from the text and no further information is requested.

The modes of interviewing that I considered appropriate for this inquiry were the two less structured designs; however, difficulties with the term unstructured have been noted in that it might give the impression of an ordinary exchange. Nonetheless, 'once a conversation is called an interview, there is both an implicit and explicit structuring of the conversation [....]. However, it is always a controlled conversation which is geared to the interviewer's research interests'. For the purposes of this study I use the term 'loosely structured' as suggested in the book *In-depth Interviewing* to define the least structured of the interview processes.³⁹ This meant that while I had a topic I wished to learn about during an

³⁸ Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 6th edn (Boston: Pearson Education, 2007), pp. 92-93.

³⁹ Victor Minichiello, Rosalie Aroni and Terrence Hays, *In-depth interviewing: Principles, Techniques, Analysis*, 3rd edn (Sydney: Pearson Education Australia, 2008), p. 53.

interview, I would allow a conversationalist approach so if Ritchie brought in other topics then they would be captured and sometimes investigated.

The interview models as expressed by the stated nomenclature define the degree of structure related to the planning and execution of questioning that the researcher employs. Several different interview methods fit into each of the three categories and include survey interviews, in-depth interviews, group interviews, and oral history interviews. The research question and aims together with the researcher's world view guides her to a suitable interview method which then implies an appropriate design.

The experience of in-depth interviewing: a narrative

The primary data source, as planned, was the in-depth interviews with John Ritchie. The initial meeting for this purpose took place at Ritchie's home at 10.30 a.m. on 4 April 2007. It was arranged as an introductory meeting and was not recorded. I explained to Ritchie the aims of my intended research. I described it generally as a life history that would include an evaluation of his music and which would involve analysis of a selection of as yet unspecified scores. I also gave him a copy of my research proposal. Ritchie was then given the opportunity to comment on my proposal and ask questions. We discussed the information letter and consent form which was signed, and copies were held by each of us.

Since I was unsure at the time of how the research would unfold, I spoke generally in terms of the information I would require but was clear that I wanted material related to all of his life and not just his music. The meeting was informal in both setting and interaction: Ritchie was a generous and affable host and we enjoyed coffee and biscuits together as we talked. This set the scene for what occurred over the following four years. We agreed to meet on a weekly basis on Mondays at 10.00 a.m. and on occasion twice weekly, usually on a Wednesday. This was an arrangement which we mostly achieved but interspersed with unavoidable lapses due to illness or other commitments. The only form of communication apart from our meetings was by telephone as Ritchie did not have internet access or email.

All of the interviews following the first two meetings between Ritchie and myself were digitally recorded as agreed. Shortly after the process began, I realised that Ritchie would begin talking about a particular event in his life in a conversational way before I had begun recording, a problematic feature that was also common with other participants. This created a conundrum for me. Could I begin recording before formalities had begun? This was not an option for me with regards to the secondary interviewees since the consent form had not been signed at that point. I decided to interrupt Ritchie on one of these occasions and gained permission to begin recording any communication immediately on arrival as I believed it might be important information that related to his life history.

It was also agreed, that at any point, if Ritchie had forgotten that he was being recorded and wished his comments to be erased, I would delete the material from the digital recording. This created many more hours of recording matter than was originally intended but the quality of the added data outweighed the extra time it took to edit the material. It was often from this particular information that new areas could be explored and new questions prompted for me to ask at a later time. The problem of other participants who began to voice their recollections of Ritchie's life prior to signing the consent form was managed by my ability to recall and question them at a suitable moment during the recorded interview about the topic they had initially introduced.

During the early stages in the research process, the interviews with Ritchie progressed in a relatively formal manner. Prior to the interview I would formulate a set of approximately twelve questions that I would pose to him. I anticipated gathering more information than what was required by the questions, in part because I expected that a progression of questions and responses would result from Ritchie's replies. For example, 'was music part of your early family life?' evolved into recollections of the music that Ritchie could recall in his early schooling and domestic settings within his extended family. Based on Ritchie's response when I approached him regarding the study, I also intuited that Ritchie was keen to talk about his experiences to me. I considered this was generally

because of his and his family's desire for his life to be documented, but also because Ritchie, in his role as educator, was eager for me to succeed.

I began, in a chronological way, to ask Ritchie for his recollections about his early childhood including his memories of his parents. I was aware as he spoke that he skimmed over this aspect of his life. There was minimal detail of events and he appeared to recollect very little about the character of his parents or of their lives together. I was uncertain if this was related to a lack of memory or time past due to his age, a psychological or emotional need to do so, or an impression I had given to him that this information was not particularly important, rather that it was his musical life I was specifically interested in. I also considered the possibility that he made the decision not to elaborate on his early life because *he* did not think it was particularly relevant to my study. Unsure as to whether I should pursue the topic at that time, I responded by allowing Ritchie to lead the conversation and digress into other subject areas that he appeared to be comfortable with.

When I reflected on these early interviews later, I came to the conclusion that it was too early in the participant-researcher relationship to probe into some areas of his life or to expect information that Ritchie clearly did not appear to be forthcoming with. I made a note to pursue matters related to family at a later stage and was rewarded with a more open response over time and on several occasions. As the interview process continued, I realised that all of the possibilities that might have given Ritchie a reason to gloss over his early life, existed to some extent.

As the interview process evolved, I could reflect on the benefits of this experience as Ritchie deviated into other areas. I was also aware that my own initial unease as a stranger in his company and home may have impacted on those early interviews. I had entered into the relationship with some trepidation and felt a certain degree of intimidation simply because of my status as a student interviewing 'Professor Ritchie'. Once I had relaxed more as a researcher-interviewer I was content on many occasions to allow Ritchie to delve into topics and events that had occurred

at any time in his life. These sorts of meanderings and topic-hopping proved a rich source of material and opened up new aspects of his life to me. Usually I would move with him and ask for further information as questions occurred to me, not unlike a conversation one might have with a friend or colleague. Thus the unstructured interview mode proved to be especially fruitful over the longer term.

I was genuinely interested in what Ritchie and the other participants had to say about their lives and believed myself to be in a very privileged position. I was always aware, however, of my particular role as researcher during these times which meant that while I engaged with Ritchie (and other participants) at each interview, I was also being guided by the dialogue to ask further questions. If there was further information that I considered would be important to know, but did not wish to ask at that time, I would quickly write a note to remind me and review it later. Conversely, on some occasions, if I decided that I wished to return to the original matter, I would achieve this by prompting Ritchie with a question during a lull in the conversation, along the lines recommended by Raleigh: 'If you judge that this is totally irrelevant, listen, but when there is a pause, tactfully draw the narrator back to the subject under discussion'.⁴⁰

Personally I found that this was one of the most difficult situations I encountered during the interview process, as I felt that I needed to consider why Ritchie had meandered in the first place. If I thought he was side-stepping answering my questions due to his discomfort, I then had to consider whether I would allow it or if I would attempt to return to the topic. My uneasiness during these moments centred on the thought that I was intruding into someone's privacy (which in a sense I was). I believe this to be a normal human response but I was aware that the intensity of my feelings was exacerbated by the environment that I had grown up in. My parents were intensely private about their personal life, both within the home and to outsiders. There was virtually nothing of an intimate nature that was discussed either as a family or between one parent and me. On the rare occasions that a subject of a personal or private nature was raised, I can remember feeling

⁴⁰ Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 2nd edn (Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press, 2005), p. 98.

acutely uncomfortable and desperately wanting the interaction to end. That these memories arose confirmed the observations of Etherington and Mason in their discussions on reflexivity. To be critically self-aware, a qualitative researcher needs to be conscious of her internal responses to the participant's dialogue together with the context in which these are placed.⁴¹ The personal memories which were thus triggered in such communications needed examining to determine any influence on the data gathering and subsequent analysis, and to further understand my self and my role in the research process.⁴²

During these times when I was reminded of my own history during interaction with Ritchie, I was left with a sense of crossing a boundary which I was not entitled to do. By discussing my feelings with a professional person outside of the inquiry, I was able to deal with these moments more successfully. That is not to say that my discomfort disappeared altogether, but I was able to proceed in a manner that indicated respect and interest. It was clear to me, that as the trust and understanding between Ritchie and me developed, I could be more forthright without intruding on his privacy or breaking any ethical codes. The narrative began to form with self-aware input from both subject and researcher.

The experience of interviewing other participants

Other participants had been connected to Ritchie by a variety of ways: as students, colleagues, performers, composers, friends, and family. A brief overview of each participant's life, together with the details of their association with Ritchie summarises the data collected from each participant. Responses included specific memories of events as well as emotions, opinions, and thoughts about those events. As well as asking specific questions, participants were invited to talk about any other recollections that had come to mind as the interview progressed. It was not uncommon for participants to comment that talking to me had triggered further memories. In addition, I wanted to know if they could offer the names of other possible participants for my research and if they had any documents that

⁴¹ Kim Etherington, *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher: Using our Selves in Research* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2004), p.9.

⁴² Mason, p. 6.

might assist with my inquiry; these were either requested by me or volunteered by participants.

I did not have the luxury of many hours over several meetings available to me in order to access the information as I did with Ritchie and therefore a different type of interview design was required. On occasion, interviews took place by telephone or interaction was conducted by email. This occurred only when a willing participant of particular importance to the study, for instance John McCaw who resided in London, England, was unable to meet or talk by any other means. Usually the responses to these questions required further investigation and in that sense, they resemble the semi-structured interview as defined above.

The method of selecting possible participants originated firstly from gaining knowledge of the various fields that Ritchie had been engaged in. Some participants naturally sprang to mind, for instance performers of Ritchie's well known works and colleagues from the School of Music at the University of Canterbury. I compiled lists under the headings of the various activities of involvement as well as a separate one for family and friends. While Ritchie's personal life was not at the heart of the study, it naturally lay on the fringes of every other aspect of his life and all non-familial participants had formed friendships with Ritchie through the activity being investigated. Apart from family, the participants were classified as performers, students or colleagues. Sub-headings were then included, for instance colleagues within the music department were separated from those from within the wider academic community at the university and from those with whom Ritchie had interacted while involved with university administration. Also noted were participants who had fulfilled more than one role in relation to Ritchie, for example a student who later became a colleague.

My aim was to interview as many people as possible who had known Ritchie for a period of time within their particular field and who, in the area of performance in particular, were successful in their own right. That a mutual relationship had been established between Ritchie and the participant through their association was

deemed more important than the length of time they had spent with each other. This was intended to provide a knowledgeable and intelligent opinion of both Ritchie's music and his abilities as a musical director and conductor. An element of success by the participants in other areas often existed although this was not specifically sought.

The interviews with the participants other than Ritchie were, by necessity and in response to the research inquiry, usually limited to one interview of between one and two hours. All were contacted by telephone or email with an explanation of the study and an invitation for their participation. On a few occasions, Ritchie initiated contact in the first instance which was intended to prepare the interviewees for my imminent approach. This occurred either because Ritchie was going to be talking to them in the interim or Ritchie considered they might be more responsive if he did so. In all of the cases where Ritchie initiated contact, people agreed to be interviewed although conclusions cannot be drawn from this since it is conceivable that they would have done so in any case. At the time I considered this a sort of paving the way for me to proceed in an amicable way. In retrospect, I remain ambivalent about this particular method of inviting people to participate because it is possible that this may have influenced their attitude towards the study and the information they chose to divulge during the interview.

If interest to participate was indicated, the information letter and consent form were then posted to interviewees in advance of the interview (see the section on ethical considerations below). This saved time as they could prepare for the interview and consider any questions they wanted to put to me about the research topic or the process. Sometimes a first introductory meeting took place either at Ritchie's or another participant's home and most, but not all, of those people I approached were willing to participate. A few people who were asked to participate in the study declined while some I initially thought of were considered too aged or unwell to approach. Two of those whom I perceived as particularly significant to the study but who had refused in the first instance by telephone, received a letter a few months later in which I detailed my reasons for wishing them to be included and asking them if they would reconsider but they did not

respond. Generally the interviews took place in participants' homes although a few were undertaken in a café. The latter was not successful as a location because of background noise and the distraction of other people present who were unconnected with the study. The reasons for these café interviews ranged from the logistics when travelling to cities other than my hometown specifically for interview purposes to personal reasons on the part of the participant.

Yow reminds researchers to 'Take the time to review background material thoroughly on the subject of the interview'.⁴³ I researched each participant's life in order to gain some understanding of their history and life experiences in music. This comprised accessing available published biographical material from written sources and the internet, and talking to Ritchie about his association with them. This enabled me to ask pertinent questions and on occasion respond to what was said with a degree of knowledge during the interview. I maintained basic courtesy by telephoning the participants the previous day to confirm the arrangements and duly arrived at the agreed time. Once I had introduced myself, coffee was invariably offered and accepted which enabled an easing of tension that existed; I was conscious of being a stranger in their homes, intruding on their time and asking personal questions about their lives. In most cases, this was the first time the participant had been in the position of interviewee and I was aware there was likely to be some apprehension present in the early stages of the interview process.

Before I began recording, the consent form was discussed and completed, with each of us retaining a copy. As I placed the digital recorder and microphone on a coffee table or other suitable place, I gave a short explanation of how it worked and commented that there was no need for them to speak any differently than during any other conversation. In every case I began the interview by stating that to enable me to place their comments and views in context, I would like them to talk about their early life, and in particular their musical background. Although the participants were sometimes hesitant throughout this part of the interview – 'oh you don't want to hear this' or 'this should be about John, not me' and on

⁴³ Yow, p. 100.

occasion ‘I’m rambling’, it was, to me, one of the most important aspects of these interviews. Not only did I gather information for my data analysis, it allowed me to engage with them in a personal way. Since most of interviews were planned as a single session, it was important to try to build a rapport as quickly as possible.

Although their lives were not under scrutiny in the same way that Ritchie’s was, each of these stories gave me a window into another fascinating and rich life. I was able to understand the varying life paths that each participant had taken and the circumstances which led them to their musical connection with Ritchie as well as their associations with other participants. I discovered that their individual narrations would include recollections of their connection with Ritchie in a natural way as they retrospectively told their life story. As with Ritchie’s interviews, I had a number of specific questions that I put to each interviewee. Often these would be answered without direct prompting as the interview continued; it was not uncommon, particularly as I became more experienced as an interviewer, for me to discover after an hour of ‘conversation’ that in fact I had already received all the information I had sought, and often much more.

Structure of the thesis

The study examines Ritchie’s life from birth contextually emphasising those events which reveal the origins of a career in music. Specific fields which developed from his working life are identified and presented as individual chapters, notwithstanding that there is overlapping of topics particularly in the areas of performing and composing. The account relating to Ritchie’s early life is written chronologically and his working life segments such as ‘Composer in the Community’ is compartmentalised chronologically into individual chapters. Additionally, a specimen analysis of Ritchie’s composition *Papanui Road* is included in the final biographical chapter.

The five middle themes cover a large part of Ritchie’s working life – composing, education, performing, curriculum, and administration. The study does not investigate or document Ritchie’s personal and family life other than as it sits within one of these main themes. The amount of data presented on a topic does

not necessarily reflect the time Ritchie spent on or lived through an event, rather it correlates to the significance which Ritchie attributed to it (and as its importance and relevance was assessed by me) as told during interviews or diarised during his life. Ritchie believed, for instance, that the trajectory of his composing life was negatively impacted on by the war years; nonetheless they remained an enduring episode in his life until his death and thus this period features appreciably in his early years.

Ethical considerations

Ethics approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Waikato was applied for and granted (see Appendix A). The ethical principles which guided the research were those of the University of Waikato as well as the National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ).⁴⁴ Participants were provided with an information letter which explained the process, expected outcomes, and the matter of confidentiality (see Appendix B). This allowed for interview commentary to be attributed to participants without issue.

As stated, not all those associated with Ritchie who were invited to participate accepted; however those who did so were, without exception, very keen to participate and expressed support for the research. Both participant and researcher retained a signed copy of the consent form which was completed prior to any interview (see Appendix C). Due to the nature of the study, care and consideration were needed with all aspects of participant interviews. This included direct interaction with participants from the first approach, arranging meetings, discussing consent, and interviewing as well as providing interviewees with their transcript and a follow up to ascertain if any amendments were required. During the rare occasions on which a participant appeared hesitant to respond to a particular question during an interview, sensitivity was used to determine whether to continue in the same vein or tactfully change direction.

⁴⁴ National Oral History Association of New Zealand, 'Code of Ethical and Technical Practice', *Ethics and Practice* (Wellington: NOHANZ, 2001), <<http://oralhistory.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/code.pdf>> [accessed 18 July 2019].

A further aspect of this study that needed consideration was the advanced years of many of the participants and how associated health issues might affect the data. Of all the participants, only two were known to have been diagnosed with a specific memory related illness, one of whom was aware of it. Fortunately, this was able to be managed as it related only to memory lapses for dates and names which were easily verified by other means. A number of participants expressed health concerns unrelated to memory which were taken into account when arranging meetings.

Three years into my study I was faced with a dilemma during one of my interviews with Ritchie. On several occasions, Ritchie had said to me ‘this is your study; you can write what you like’ and would cheerfully invite: ‘ask me anything at all’. Ritchie had long since signed the consent form and we had spent many hours together discussing events, listening, and talking with the recorder faithfully noting every word. I had made a practice of recording most of our conversations whether I expected they might be relevant to the study or not although exceptions were made when either of us wanted to check something out or make a comment ‘off the record’. An easy flow of communication was established between us and both of us were amenable to changing direction in what we were exploring at any given meeting. We were able to accommodate the other’s needs in practical terms when arranging times and days that we would spend together researching Ritchie’s life. A kind of *laissez faire* existed with my approach to the participant relationship – the kind of ease and acceptance that only comes with time. I was aware of my responsibilities as researcher and always treated Ritchie with respect and was mindful that our relationship was borne out of my study of him and his life.

I was shaken out of this sense of security one day when Ritchie refused to answer a question that I put to him. In explanation I was keen to investigate a possible link between his personal relationships and specific works he had composed. I became aware then of something that existed in the relationship that I had previously been unaware of; his concept of what a life history meant was embedded in his own beliefs and view of the world, which I did understand, and

he assumed that mine would be the same, which I certainly had not been aware of. I needed to reconsider then what path I was taking with the information I had learned of Ritchie's life – or did I? Certainly, Ritchie had already disclosed some quite intimate matters related to this inquiry and appeared to have no compunction in choosing to refuse to elaborate on matters further when prompted to do so. Nonetheless, it would have to be assumed that his responses were based on his belief that any material used would be presented in the precise way which was in accord with his own thinking and that any other viewpoint was erroneous. Additionally, in terms of sensitivity, such a stance would have implications not only for Ritchie but for others.⁴⁵ As Elliott points out, 'The way in which the researcher interprets and analyses the narratives produced in the interview also may have an impact (either positive or negative) on the interviewee.'⁴⁶

This raised another issue, which is to consider with great care the impact life study research has on the life of the one being studied and those who participate by donating their time to relay their recollections to the researcher. I was certainly aware that many of the participants who I spoke to talked about Ritchie with great affection and admiration and offered only positive comments. Several scenarios were possible for this bias: these participants did not know of anything detrimental to say about Ritchie, had forgotten with the passage of time, or they simply did not wish to speak of any perceived negative experiences. I might interpret certain nuances as determining which one of those circumstances was likely while each participant talked to me but I had no evidence to support my reading of this. I also learned that these participants expected the result of my research to fit in with their perspective of what a life history was; perhaps a narrative or story of a society (of which they were part), with Ritchie as the central figure, relaying the events and interactions enjoyed with Ritchie and others in the manner that they had conveyed those events to me.

⁴⁵ Hennie Boeijs, *Analysis in Qualitative Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2010), p. 48.

⁴⁶ Jane Elliott, *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), p. 141.

My initial and unspoken response to Ritchie's disagreement with me, (which was not so much that I had asked a particular question or that he had not answered, rather it was the way I was proposing to use the information), was that I did not want to change what I had set out to do. I believed that the way I intended to present this material was both valid and within our agreement. Over time and using reflexivity, I was able to think about what had occurred more objectively. I decided that Ritchie's feelings should be considered in this matter and I would be open to Ritchie's view that the cause and effect relationship I was investigating and expected to find within the data might not exist. Indeed, I contemplated if my interest in this concept could be based on an assumption stemming from my own perspective which I wanted to investigate for my own sake. In the final analysis, the direction the study ultimately took, in which Ritchie's family and close relationships were not examined, determined the outcome.

Much as a researcher initially prepares and does her utmost to maintain self-reflection during the interview and analysis process, lapses due to unconscious bias may occur. Avi Rose in Chapter 12 of *Lives in Context* discusses the moment when he realised that he was focussing on one (perceived positive) aspect rather than the two sides of a phenomenon due to an unwillingness to experience his own painful memories which had been triggered.⁴⁷ Ultimately, the inquirer must balance the pursuit of knowledge with the safety of participants and 'What we think might do harm we cannot publish'. Conversely, as already stated, wide-ranging interviews such as the case in this study provide opportunities for disclosures. This happens due to the long-term participant relationship and the interviewer's ability to listen and respond carefully over time. It is also possible that the researcher may reveal aspects of their own lives which, if done in a manner which is appropriate to the setting and does not arouse discomfort in the participant, fosters rapport and develops trust between the researcher and subject. Clandinin opines that this openness is not in itself unethical but that the material which participants themselves present in any ensuing discussion must be

⁴⁷ *Lives in Context: The Art of Life History Research*, ed. by Ardra L. Cole and J. Gary Knowles (Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press, 2001), pp. 172-173.

considered carefully in the final analysis.⁴⁸ During the course of this study, I experienced a number of personal events which contributed to a delay in its completion. The first event was of particular significance and after careful consideration I deemed it appropriate to reveal some details of this to Ritchie in order to explain any interview rescheduling. This in turn prompted Ritchie to confide in me the circumstances of a childhood experience which had caused him discomfort and which he had perceived as broadly similar to mine. While this was a sensitive issue, in the final analysis I included this in the study since Ritchie did not prohibit it and because of its perceived consequences in Ritchie's life.

⁴⁸ *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*, ed. by D. Jean Clandinin (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2007), pp. 546-547.

Chapter 2: Early Years and Early Childhood

Ancestral Background

John Thain Ritchie emigrated from Scotland in the early part of the twentieth century following favourable reports from his brother, Thomas, who had travelled from their hometown Peterculter, near Aberdeen, to Dunedin, New Zealand, the previous year. John, Thomas and younger brother Robert were the surviving issue of a second marriage for their father, Alexander Ritchie, to Johanna (later called Joan) Grant. Born in 1840, Johanna married Alexander Ritchie on 5 May 1871 at Old Machar Parish, Aberdeen. Aged thirty-one, she was twenty-nine years her husband's junior.

Alexander Ritchie was born at Burnside, Peterculter on 9 April 1811, and the fifth of nine children to parents Alexander Ritchie (b. 1770), a crofter, and Janet Ritchie née Berry. He married Margaret Adam in 1832 when they were both twenty-one years of age. Alexander Ritchie was a man of reasonable means, variously a shoe and boot maker and master grocer, who owned and managed his own businesses. Margaret bore him seven children but only their firstborn, daughter Margaret, who was born in the year of her parents' marriage and the youngest Adam, born in his mother's forty-fifth year, survived well into adulthood. From the time around the birth of their sixth child in 1846 Margaret suffered a number of episodes of 'mania' during which time she was committed to an asylum, ultimately dying in confinement from 'maniacal exhaustion' in 1878.

Johanna was the daughter of Andrew Grant, a labourer, and Elizabeth Grant, née Dingwall. Originally from Portmahomack in Rosshire County, the couple had moved to Aberdeen by the time Johanna was born. Whilst most children entered the workforce at around thirteen years of age, an increasing population in Aberdeen meant that there was a high demand for household workers, and younger children were regularly employed in the 'big houses'. In 1848 at eight

years of age Johanna was in service as a housemaid to a minister, Dr Edershiem earning the sum of one pound per year.⁴⁹

At the time of Johanna and Alexander's marriage Johanna was employed as a millworker and both of her parents were deceased. Alexander was living in three roomed accommodation with his youngest son, Adam, a scholar of fifteen years of age. Ten years later, Johanna had given birth to five children, three of whom survived to reach adulthood. The eldest, John Thain Ritchie was born at 4.30a.m. on 29 October 1874 at 37 Barron St, Woodside in Aberdeen. Robert followed in 1876 and Thomas in 1877. Adam had since married and left the household, leaving the family of five along with a single male boarder domiciled in the family home at Barron Street.

In 1891 after a relatively long life, seventy-nine year old Alexander of 13 Carlyle Cottage died. Thomas, his youngest son at fourteen years of age, was employed as a grocer's message boy – quite possibly at his father's establishment – while the two older sons worked at a paper mill. Ten years later Alexander's widow Johanna was residing with her three unmarried sons aged twenty-four, twenty-five and twenty-six at 32 Gladstone Place. The men were all employed, but by this time John Thain was working as a stationer's clerk while Robert and Thomas both worked at a paper mill. It seemed that John Ritchie, senior, was now learning the trade which he was to follow throughout his adult life.

Three and a half years before Alexander and Johanna were married, Margaret Sim, a rag cutter, gave birth to a daughter, Isabella, just a few houses down from where Alexander Ritchie lived with his youngest son, Adam. Born on 7 October 1867, Isabella was the third of three illegitimate children Margaret bore. Her two other daughters were at that time aged eleven and seventeen. Within three years of Isabella's birth, Margaret had obtained employment at a paper mill while her two

⁴⁹ John Ritchie Papers: Ritchie Family Private Collection (Christchurch). Thomas (Tom) Ritchie Memoirs compiled by Sandy Garner. Reverend Alfred Edershiem, a Viennese born Jew who converted to Christianity, was given the ministry of the Free Church of Old Aberdeen in around 1848.

elder daughters were no longer living with her. By the time she was thirteen years of age, Isabella too had left her mother's side and was instead residing at Meiklewood Smithy with her now married sister, Ann, and her husband, thirty year old master blacksmith Thomas Keen, along with their infant son, a brother-in-law, and an apprentice blacksmith.

On 7 June 1901, John Thain Ritchie married Isabella Sim. Isabella's mother Margaret had since died and her eldest sister too appears to have passed away. At thirty-three, Isabella was John's senior by six years. No children were forthcoming, and neither of John's brothers was quick to marry. In 1906, the youngest Ritchie, Thomas, now twenty-nine years of age, set sail for New Zealand, settling in Dunedin on his arrival. It was to be a further sixteen years before he married twenty-six year old New Zealand born Mildred George –and not until after their first child, Sandy, was born. Together they raised a family of six, of which the youngest, Herbert, was the sole surviving issue at the beginning of this study. A year after Thomas's departure from Aberdeen, perhaps buoyed by positive reports from the Antipodes, John Thain and his wife Isabella, his brother Robert (Bob) and their mother Joan left London on the ship *Ruapehu* bound for New Zealand. They arrived on 28 September 1907.

The Ritchies appear to have settled relatively easily into Dunedin soon after disembarking. In 1908 John Thain and Isabella were living in Melbourne Street, shifting to Gamma Street in 1914 while John Thain was employed as a travelling salesman for Gordon and Gotch, a major newspaper and magazine distribution company. Joan, Robert and Thomas lived together in the Highgate suburb of Dunedin. By 1922 Thomas and his bride Mildred, along with Joan and Robert had moved to 23 Michie Street where they were to reside for the remainder of their lives.



Figure 2: Ritchie in front of 23 Michie Street, Dunedin, 2009.

It was a somewhat strange and perhaps uneasy living arrangement. A sleep-out at the back of the house became Robert's home and he kept himself separate from the rest of the family, even eating his meals alone.



Figure 3: Ritchie outside the sleep-out at 23 Michie Street, Dunedin, 2009.

Robert worked as a fitter for the Roslyn Woollen mills, one of two mills in the region which employed over five hundred staff. He was known to like a drink or two and certainly he drank enough alcohol for it to be noticed and commented on. He died on 26 April 1950 aged seventy-six from injuries sustained in a motor accident outside St Joseph's Cathedral.

The Ritchie household increased dramatically in the ten years 1922-1932 with six of Thomas and Mildred's seven children surviving. Only their third child, John Grant, (1925-1928) died in infancy. Soon after his arrival in Dunedin, Thomas Ritchie was tuning pianos for the music company Charles Begg & Co., and in 1908 secured a job there as a music seller's assistant. His diligence and expertise paid off and he was appointed manager of the Dunedin branch following the death of Charles Begg in 1916. He made two overseas trips in this capacity, in which he travelled to the United States of America and Europe. He became general manager of Begg's in 1927 and remained in that role until he resigned in 1933 at the age of fifty-six. Thomas was the most financially successful of the three brothers and also notably long-lived. At fifty years of age he set up his own company called Ritchie's Tours (not related to the Ritchie bus company of today) which specialised in organising and conducting escorted tours of Europe. He continued to manage the business and accompany tour parties until he was ninety, four years before his death in 1971.

John Thain and Isabella remained childless; however not long after their arrival in Dunedin they became the guardians of a young girl whose parents had separated, neither of whom were able to care for her. Irene Audrey Duncan McDonald, born on 7 April 1907, was the third child after twin boys (b.1906) of Margaret and Stanley McDonald. A short-lived marriage, it appears the children's father emigrated from New Zealand and settled in Sydney. A possible scenario is that the church where the families attended intervened on the children's behalf and John Thain and Isabella were seen as suitable caregivers to Irene. Either a formal adoption did not take place or the documents have been lost; however Irene Ritchie (McDonald) was enrolled at Kaikorai Primary from May 1912 until December 1917 with her father listed as W. Ritchie (one assumes the incorrect first initial was an error in transcribing). She completed her middle education, Standard Five and Six, at Maori Hill School where she was known as Audrey Ritchie before attending Otago Girls High School as Irene Audrey Ritchie. Audrey's early schooling is notable for several prizes being awarded to her including a gold medal as Dux of Maori Hill School on 22 December 1920. John

Thain, Isabella and Audrey appear to have lived together as a family soon after the couple set foot in New Zealand until 1919.

In the years following their arrival in New Zealand, Thomas and John Thain Ritchie kept in close contact with each other and, whilst otherwise employed, also ventured into other areas together in an attempt to secure greater financial reward. There is evidence that they tried their luck with gold prospecting around 1926 at Kwarau, as shown by the retrospective article and accompanying photographs in *The Weekly News* on 31 July 1935. Kwarau Amalgamated was formed to build the Kwarau dam with the object of lowering the water level of the riverbed in order to access the gold which was believed to be there.



Figure 4: Thomas Ritchie and John Ritchie at Kwarau considering gold prospecting. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Unfortunately this was thwarted by the return flow from the Shotover River and the project was deemed a failure. The Ritchie brothers appear not to have prospered from their endeavours and they turned to another enterprise: the purchase of a paper importing and selling company, A. A. Howes & Co.

By 1920 John Thain Ritchie's personal life had gone through major changes and upheaval. His relationship with his wife had broken down and in the second half of 1919, Isabella and Audrey moved out of the family home. During this time and possibly prior to Isabella and John Thain's separation John Thain met and became romantically involved with a young woman who was more than twenty three years his junior, Jessie Harrison. Jessie Constance Harrison was born on 6 April 1898, the seventh of eight children and the youngest daughter of Robert and Ellen Harrison. Jessie's father Robert Stewart Harrison was one of eleven children born to Henry and Margaret Harrison (née Stewart) in County Leitrim, Northern Ireland. Robert immigrated to New Zealand at the age of twenty, settling in Dunedin in 1878. Six years later he married eighteen year old Ellen Blanche Mant who had arrived in Dunedin with her family from Wimbledon, London in January 1872 when she was six years of age. Blanche, as she was known, was the daughter of a contractor with a certain amount of refinement and education while Robert was a labourer. Between the years 1886 and 1902 Blanche gave birth to eight children – five girls and three boys. All survived well into adulthood with an age at death ranging from between forty-four and seventy-nine. Music played some part in family life; their Arthur Street residence housed an upright piano which the two youngest children, Jessie and Arthur, learnt to play with a degree of proficiency.

Birth and Childhood of John Ritchie

Jessie Constance Ritchie attended Union School, completing her schooling at the end of her Standard 6 year aged thirteen, 'destination' home. As the youngest daughter, she may have been expected to remain there to become the caregiver of her parents as they aged. Four years at home passed before she enrolled in a shorthand and typing night class at King Edward Technical College. Shortly after completing the course she was rewarded with a position as an office assistant and it was likely that it was in this capacity that she met salesman John Thain Ritchie. Without the benefit of direct interviews with those concerned or diaries authored by them, it is difficult to say precisely how the relationship between John Thain Ritchie and Jessie formed. Suffice to say, at a point in time before the birth of

their first and only child, John Thain Ritchie and Jessie Harrison had set up home together in Miramar, Wellington.



Figure 5: Jessie Constance Harrison, c1918. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Jessie's departure from both family home and hometown under what must have been a rather dark cloud would not have passed without mention amongst her family's circle of friends and acquaintances. In the early days of her new life in Wellington, Jessie was left in the unenviable position of being without those who, under normal circumstances, would have been able to provide support during her pregnancy and the early days as a first-time mother. There is no evidence that she had friends to turn to or that her family visited her then or later as time went by. Whilst John Ritchie senior busied himself in his work, sometimes travelling around the country as his employment demanded, even visiting his own family in Dunedin, young Jessie was left to attend to the home and wait for the birth of their baby. This would have been difficult under usual circumstances with a sometimes absent husband but who might have provided support and conversation in the evenings and weekends. Notwithstanding that women's expectations of their primary relationship in the 1920s were markedly different to those in the second half of the twentieth century, without family or friends Jessie must have felt isolated and confined. She was without independence in both financial and lifestyle terms.

On 29 September 1921 at Rongotai near Lyall Bay in a private nursing home quite possibly right where Wellington airport runway is now, John Anthony Ritchie – or John Harrison – was born (see Appendix E). Ritchie’s memories of his early childhood are in one sense unremarkable in that his physical needs were attended to and, as far as he could recollect, there was nothing untoward in the behaviour of his parents towards him in his very first years. The atmosphere in the home was seemingly calm and quiet – maybe unnaturally so – and any disagreement between the adults was hidden from the child. There was little to rejoice or complain about: ‘things just were’. Ritchie’s account of those early years during interviews was presented as a series of incidents or stories that were told in such a way as to be (apparently) intentionally entertaining.



Figure 6: A young Ritchie. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

He recounted one such occasion when as a three-year-old he ran outside the house with no clothes on and stood on the boundary fence for all to see. It was early in the morning and the only person to pass by was the milkman who took Ritchie back to his parents at the house. They were very irate at his behaviour and bundled him inside and gave him a stern scolding. This was the first conscious

memory of his parents' anger being directed at him. Ritchie took great delight in relaying this account, although he was not able to explain his antics because although he could remember being chastised, he could not fully recall the incident itself; much of it was based on the re-telling by others at some point later. Perhaps the ordinary or mundane was, to Ritchie, not worthy of mention as evidenced by one of his first statements to me: 'I hope you find enough to write about; I've led a very boring life'.



Figure 7: Pre-school Ritchie. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Notwithstanding the friction that was building between his parents, Ritchie survived his pre-school years relatively unscathed. There must have been some bridge building that occurred between his mother and her parents since he remembered that he travelled with Jessie by train to visit his maternal grandparents on at least one occasion. Ritchie thinks it possible that they accompanied his father on one of his business trips down to Dunedin but John Thain was certainly not received at the Harrison's home. It was a fairly sombre

affair but it was also the first time he realised that his mother had some competency on the piano. He listened to her play the instrument which sat in the lounge and recalls that he admired her musical skill tremendously. It was many years later when experience and education altered his view of her ability, judging her then to be a sympathetic or handy pianist. The visit was not as successful as Jessie may have hoped and in fact highlighted the isolation she was enduring in Wellington. Ritchie did not recall that the experience with the Harrisons was one of celebration or that he and his mother were welcomed by the family. There may have been an additional visit over the course of Ritchie's first five years but the trips were at most, occasional.

John Thain spent rather more recreational time with his son than Jessie, in part because he had the means to do so. He was an avid sports fan and enjoyed going to soccer games and rugby matches. His interactions with sports people and business associates suggest he achieved some social and financial success in the 1920s. A keen golfer, he belonged to the local club where he enjoyed both the game and socialising with his fellow players. Ritchie would accompany his father to the golf course, both as his father's (paid) caddy, then as a novice using some cut down irons his father had fashioned for him. It was from this that Ritchie's lifelong love and enjoyment of golf began. John Thain was a deep thinker and would enjoy philosophising with like-minds but would just as easily passionately discuss the virtues and vices of the players of a football team, a skill which young Ritchie too enjoyed later in life amongst his wide circle of friends.

There was little music in the home but Ritchie recalled his father, a 'dour Scotsman', singing Scottish folk songs around the house and to Ritchie at bedtime. Ritchie remembered one particular song consisting of many verses, the first of which describes the life of a bunny rabbit running happily over the fields. By the end of the song the bunny has been shot and killed by the farmer and then hung from a hook in the local village fish and meat shop. This sorrowful singing tale inevitably brought tears to the young Ritchie's eyes each time he heard it which was evident in his recounting of the story. John Thain was also an avid Harry Lauder fan and amassed a collection of Lauder's recordings which he played

regularly on his gramophone. His father took Ritchie to a Lauder concert at St James Theatre, Wellington. Ritchie doubts his father was particularly musical but he loved Scots songs and Harry Lauder was one of the most famous Scots entertainers of the time. Ritchie was rather too young to enjoy the proceedings and during the concert he created a stir by crying loudly when Lauder burst a balloon on stage.

Notwithstanding the outings with his father, the picture which emerged while listening to Ritchie's story was of a little boy who spent much of his time with a lonely, remote mother who was not able to show him maternal love and affection. Additionally, the reprimand he received at age three for his perceived misdemeanour seemed to mark the beginnings of a different sort of family existence which included the sound of John Thain and Jessie arguing behind closed doors and a tension in the house which Ritchie felt but did not understand. Ritchie described his mother in the manner of someone talking about a distant relative he had an attachment to but only saw once or twice a year. While this might be partly because of how their lives changed over the next few years, a bond would usually have formed from those very early years which would have elicited a different response. John Thain grew increasingly impatient with the much younger woman. Perhaps Jessie felt intimidated by his increasing anger and paternalistic behaviour towards her but in any event the relationship quite quickly became one of irritation on his part and withdrawal on hers which, unfortunately, extended to her son.

Jessie had left the confines of her family home with optimism but soon found that she had exchanged her own father for a man who treated her as though she was his wayward daughter. Perhaps John Thain regretted his actions once the first flush of romance had passed and it became obvious to him that he and Jessie were not the fit he had imagined or hoped for. He expected Jessie to be content at home with their son while he concentrated on forging out a life where his business dealings and financial security were paramount. He was used to an autonomous existence where he could please himself both at work and socially. He had previously experienced a marriage with a woman who had been content to

accompany him at his behest to New Zealand, miles away from her home and family. Jessie, who had once appeared pleasant, quiet and amenable, became restless and unhappy with the life he offered. Ritchie could not recall any time that his parents went out together and it would be expected that she needed more than this current existence afforded; interaction with people of her own age and to be part of a social scene. She thought about travel and she looking longingly to England, her mother's birthplace, but she was bound by her circumstances including her son, John. Ritchie believed that his parents' rocky relationship played a part in the decision that was made to send him to boarding school, either to provide an environment in which they could identify the problems and work to repair their connection or, and the more likely scenario, to terminate it without their son present. Either way, Ritchie was not party to these machinations and the order and timing of his parents' separation was obscured by his absence from home.

Croydon School



Figure 8: A young Ritchie at Croydon. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

At the start of the school year in 1927, five-year old Ritchie began his education as a boarder at Wellington Diocesan Boys School, more commonly known as Croydon (and now Wellesley) College. The school was situated in Days Bay, Wellington and accommodated between fifty and sixty boarders. His father must have been making a reasonable living at this time in order to pay for the fees demanded by this private Church of England school. The rationale behind sending Ritchie to attend Croydon is not clear. His father was not religious and it is unlikely that Jessie would have held any influence over this decision. By the time Ritchie was due to start school, his parents' relationship was very strained. Ritchie was at an age where his parents' arguments and disagreements did not escape him and he was aware of feelings of unease and insecurity. Croydon was the epitome of order and discipline with well-defined parameters of

expected behaviour for students and staff alike. The particular nature of managing

around fifty boys day and night meant that all activities including recreation times were scheduled, each taking place within a time frame with few variables and little flexibility. The school surroundings were congenial; the sweeping driveway edged with trees ran alongside the large front lawn, stopping in front of the veranda which extended along the length of the large two storey wooden building.

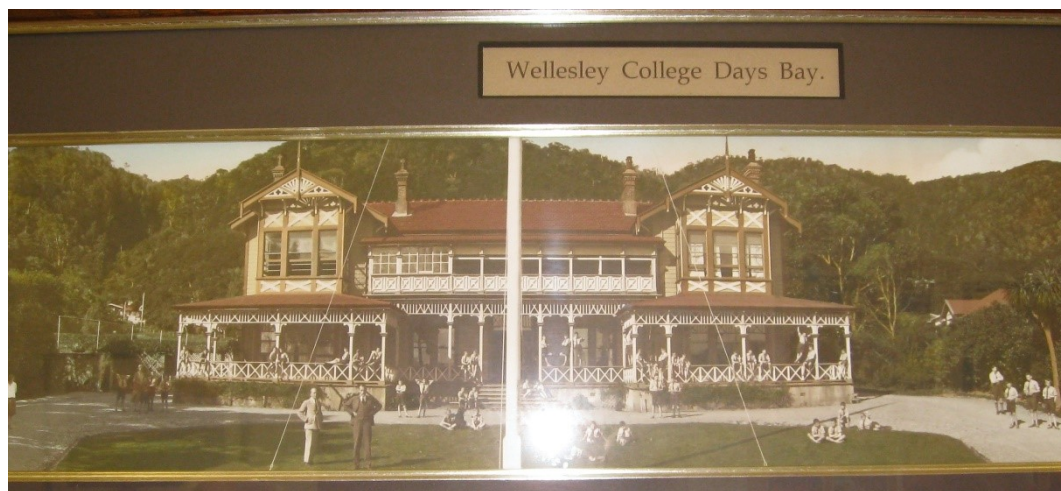


Figure 9: Croydon College.

Inside, warm red patterned carpet covered the entranceway floor and the walls were lined with rich wood panelling. The ornate wooden staircase wound its way up to the second story dormitories where the boys were assigned beds in rooms according to age. These were sparsely furnished but spacious with ample natural light reflecting onto the highly polished floor. The boys' uniforms were pristine and rules of dress were strictly adhered to during the school day and any outings.

Ritchie's first days and ensuing months and years at Croydon were marked by feelings of homesickness. He experienced the loss of the familial home with his mother and father and the loss of freedom experienced by most children when they start school. Initially he cried at night in bed but as time went by he accepted the inevitable and, whilst he never particularly enjoyed his time there, adapted to the rather austere life the school had to offer. Sport was highly valued and all students participated in various team games including rugby and cricket. Ritchie recalled captaining one of the junior football teams, The Slimy Tadpoles, on occasion and being pitted against The Frisky Frogs which was captained by his

friend, Stitchbury. He revelled in the cheers of the other boys as he led the team onto the field in front of the school building, and thoroughly enjoyed the games regardless of the outcome. Ritchie believed that the naming of such teams was one of headmaster Colonel Skelley's foibles.⁵⁰ Daily swims in the harbour nearby at 6.30 a.m. in the morning during the first and last term of each year were a compulsory part of school life. The breathtakingly cold water provided the necessary stimulus to engage in vigorous movement in any direction to get the blood flowing. Music at the school was neither encouraged nor discouraged but it was largely absent apart from singing in the chapel during the daily service.



Figure 10: Ritchie aged about eight. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

One of Ritchie's most vivid memories is of an older boy, Edgar Kain, standing in a corner of the school yard out of sight and hearing of the staff, reciting the not too insignificant number of swear words in his vocabulary to a star-struck audience of mostly younger boys. Ritchie and Kain formed a friendship based on a shared interest in sport as well as flight and aeroplanes, and a similarly disrespectful attitude towards school life. This sentiment extended to the execution of a rather ill-thought out plan to run away from school. The two boys spent several lunch and playtime breaks plotting the break-out which simply involved leaving the confines of the school when the opportunity best

⁵⁰ Colonel is believed to be an adopted title, possibly by the students, rather than a strictly military one. Claude Henry Thomas Skelley (1880-1962) held the rank of Second Lieutenant in the New Zealand Army during World War One.

'Claude Henry Thomas Skelley', *Auckland Museum: War Memorial Online Cenotaph* <<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C65402>> [accessed 18 July 2019].

presented itself. Unfortunately, the boys' youth – they were at the most aged eight and eleven – meant that the scheme lacked the necessary planning to ensure they had the basic provisions for the journey.

They left the grounds unnoticed on the chosen day and headed out of the bay towards Wellington, being careful to walk up the hill parallel to the main thoroughfare, but out of sight of any foot or other traffic that might pass by. The weather was fine and for the first period of time, the excitement of what they had dared to do kept them buoyed and talkative; however as time passed they both became aware of their hunger. They tried to ignore it at first, thinking that if they walked a little further a chance happening might provide them with some relief, although they weren't sure how that would transpire; perhaps they would find something palatable on the road or on a fruit tree growing in the rather sandy and barren soil. When they had walked in silence for some further minutes, the realisation that a known source of nourishment was unlikely to present itself compelled them to look around for something else, something that was readily available and hopefully edible. It may have been the name of the plant or its appearance and that it was in plentiful supply, but in any case they decided on the leaves of a cabbage tree. They gathered some of the greenery and sat down trying to shade themselves from the sun and heat. The taste was not pleasant and the texture quite unlike anything they had eaten before – even at the boarding school. It was not long before they were both violently ill, vomiting and retching until they were utterly worn out and thinking that perhaps life at Croydon was bearable after all.

After they had gathered whatever composure they could muster, they trudged down the hillside, neither admitting their failure to approach the expedition with due care nor articulating their wish to be found and taken back to school. The sentiment hung silently over them as they reached the road and anxiously looked both ways, too unwell to mind if they were seen. They did not have much time to wait before a dust trail in the distance signalled the appearance of a familiar black car. Colonel Skelley stopped as they approached and both boys got in and sat silently as the car was turned around and driven back to Days Bay. The

headmaster was not unsympathetic to their state of ill health; however the rules were such that a compulsory caning took place almost immediately on their return. Kain's punishment was commensurate with his age in comparison to Ritchie's and he was berated harshly, receiving a similarly severe caning for leading a younger boy astray. Unbeknown to them at the time, circumstances beyond their control would soon part the boys, with their unlikely pairing coming to an abrupt end. It was years later when Ritchie recognised Croydon's infamous curser and fellow escapee as the legendary RAF air ace of World War II, Edgar 'Cobber' Kain (1918-1940).

A Dramatic Change

Ritchie's time as a boarder at Croydon was interspersed with occasional trips home accompanied by his father. These respites were remembered for the increasing withdrawal of his mother. Naturally placid and gentle she did not generally engage easily in conversation with her son but the detachment soon extended beyond her usual reticence. She refrained from asking Ritchie about his school life and how he was doing there. To Ritchie at that time, this became more or less normal – he certainly wasn't going to question it – and he spent much of his free time playing outside or on outings with his father.



Figure 11: John Thain Ritchie with son John Ritchie. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

At the end of one of the school terms when Ritchie was around nine or ten years of age, the leaving was different; both his father and the headmaster were particularly grave and sombre and there was a concerted effort to gather all of his belongings together. Father and son boarded the ferry as was the usual mode of transport and travelled across the harbour to central Wellington. As Ritchie walked quickly at his father's side trying to match his brisk long strides, he became aware of the unfamiliarity of the route they were travelling. John Thain's dour demeanour was more pronounced than usual,

silencing Ritchie. They arrived at what appeared to be a two storey residence in a

street of like buildings when his father stopped and opened the gate for them both to pass through. He led his son through the front door and into a room to the right via the dark hallway. With communal dining, shared facilities and one room between father and son, this was to be the first of several boarding houses in which Ritchie and his father lived and called home over the next three to four years.

Ritchie saw his mother soon after his return from Croydon College. To Ritchie it was the moment when his parents parted ways, recalled as a moment in time, a snapshot, 'at the top of the Vivien Street steps'. From his youthful perspective, his father was silent, his stern expression contrasting with his mother's young, hesitant countenance as farewells were said before father and son walked away leaving Jessie behind. Indeed while Ritchie relayed this as the separation of his parents, the story only makes sense in the context of his mother saying goodbye to her son. His parents' separation had already taken place while he was at school but to Ritchie this memory symbolised the end of his parents' relationship and life as he had known it up until that time.

It was a dramatic change of life for Ritchie, an event which passed unspoken between Ritchie and his father. Contact with his mother during the next two years was infrequent and unexpected, for him at least. He knew intuitively not to talk about her with his father and there was no mention of her from him. Not surprisingly, given that he had already experienced and adapted to the separation from his parents while at boarding school, the loss of his mother in family life was of less significance than the marked alteration to his living conditions and forfeiture of school and friends. The occasional meeting with Jessie was not particularly significant to him; it was pleasant enough, neither joyous nor wretched.

On 25 of November 1932, as unexpected as Ritchie's removal from Croydon, his father asked that he accompany him to Wellington wharf. He waved goodbye to Jessie while she stood on the deck of the *Zealandia* as it set sail for Australia.

From there she boarded the *Orsova* bound for England, arriving on 18 January 1933. She never returned to New Zealand.



Figure 12: Jessie Constance Harrison's passport in the name of Constance Harrison, issued just a week before she left New Zealand. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

After a few changes in both school and boarding house, father and son Ritchie settled at 18 Hobson Street in the inner city suburb of Thorndon, apparently next door to number 22 where Frederick (Fred) Page was to live some years later when he was Professor of Music at Victoria University College in Wellington. The large motor car, the remaining asset Ritchie senior had retained from the more successful times over the last ten years, was kept in a garage close by but was rarely used.



Figure 13: Ritchie in John Thain's motor car. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Home was situated not far from town and his father's work, and foot and tram were the usual modes of transport. Ritchie was enrolled at The Terrace, a public co-education school which serviced the inner city and which later became the correspondence school. Ritchie was thrown into a new world of seeming disarray where he found the pronounced clamour of the playground intimidating, and where the earlier rigours of study and homework were replaced with a rather more relaxed approach to lessons and learning. Aided by his father's inherent belief in education and a strict work ethic however, he adapted to his change of circumstances. His initial bewilderment of public school life began to change. His quiet approach to his studies earned him reasonable results academically, as well as the teachers' respect, and his enthusiastic participation and skill in sport compensated for his small stature and gave him the acceptance of his peers.

Ritchie's class teacher, a Mr Goldman, also taught music in the school and introduced the class to singing using the first *Dominion Songbook*. He taught the children the songs by rote which they sang to the accompaniment of his modest piano playing. This was the first time that some musical sensitivity was awakened in Ritchie. He enjoyed the singing and began to be aware of the relationships between tones and keys, but since he had no knowledge of the terminology used in music or access to an instrument or manuscript paper, this was only in a practical and intuitive sense. Ritchie recalled that Mr Goldman talked about scales so that they could make sense of the relationship between the rise and fall of notes and this did give Ritchie some musical insight into pitch and tonality.

Once school was over, Ritchie would usually walk to his father's place of business in the Southern Cross Buildings, Brandon Street, and spend his time there until the end of the working day. Whilst the business was in line with John Thain's field of knowledge, it was struggling financially to break even. This was the second time Ritchie's business acumen had been called into question. His first foray into business in New Zealand took place in 1918 when he had gone into partnership with an associate, William Murie. Five years later, Ritchie's brother Thomas bought Murie out and the company's name changed from Murie and Ritchie to Ritchie Brothers Limited. Its registered office was in Cuba Street,

Wellington and the company was listed as Manufacturers' Agents. There was a sizeable nominal capital of seven thousand two hundred pounds of which both brothers had an equal interest.

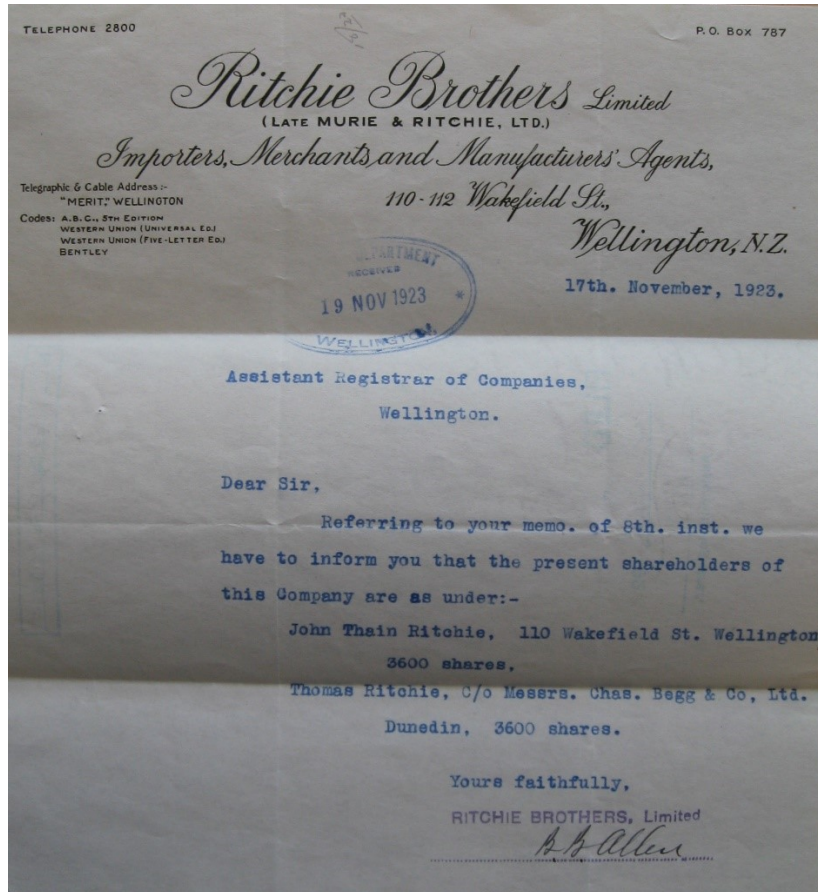


Figure 14: Letter from Ritchie Brothers to Registrar of Companies. Used with permission.

Most of the contacts and business dealings the brothers made related to connections from their former life in Scotland or from more recent associations including ex-patriots from the British Isles, many of whom had settled in Dunedin. Ritchie had left his paid position with Gordon and Gotch to manage and oversee the day to day running of the business while Thomas retained his employment at Begg's Music.

For a while the success of the company seemed assured but by 1927 it was struggling. John Thain's complicated domestic situation of two women and two children to care for may have contributed to its downfall but likely the boom and

bust of New Zealand's economy from the early 1920s until the Second World War, a factor in the collapse of many businesses and rising unemployment, caused its demise. When the company failed John Thain was left with the unenviable task of having to take care of himself and son amid the breakdown of his relationship with Jessie, and at a time when his health was beginning to suffer. Looking for another venture, he was encouraged by the owner of a paper indent company, George Howes, to buy into A.A. Howes together with Christchurch accountant A. McKellar. In 1930 each man invested a modest one thousand pounds in the company with a view to ensuring its future success, while Howes retained his main holding. A year later, Howes died suddenly and his interest was taken over by the two remaining shareholders. Whilst the company had been a moderately successful business in its time, the investment was made at an inopportune time just as the paper business was undergoing major changes in New Zealand. This coincided too with the onset of the world-wide depression, the full impact of which was still to come.

Ritchie enjoyed his time at John Thain's place of work in the city, helping pack up items and spending time in the office with his father's friends and associates. One such colleague was Scottish born Cliff Porter (1899-1976). Ritchie remembers the two men talking endlessly about rugby and sport generally. Porter had captained the successful All Blacks tour of Britain in 1924-25 and their clean sweep of the thirty-two games played had earned them the title of The Invincibles. Although money was tight and there were no luxuries, John Thain still enjoyed sport as a spectator and took his son to some of the rugby games nearby. John Thain was most keen on football (soccer) but he was unable to ignite any spark for the sport in Ritchie; on occasion he would go alone to watch a local football match and leave Ritchie to his own devices. Ritchie would join up with some of his school friends who were also at a loose end and they would hang out in the wooded area at the back of the school. These times were a far cry from his early days of relatively close supervision at Croydon. Ritchie recalled that there was some trepidation in visiting this area as some of the boys had spoken of a man who was known to frequent the area and prey on boys. Fortunately for Ritchie, neither he

nor the particular friends he played with in the woods were approached by this unsavoury person.

There was however an unfortunate set of incidents which occurred at one of the boarding houses. There can be no doubt that John Thain was an attentive and conscientious father who did his best to manage his son's schooling and other activities. Without his mother or another person to supervise the boy during the times when John Thain was not able to oversee him, however, Ritchie's vulnerability as a child alone was exposed to any unscrupulous and predatory persons. Under these circumstances eleven year old Ritchie became victim to two young women in their twenties who were also residents of the establishment where Ritchie lived. The abuse took place on several occasions over a few months but may have continued for much longer if John Thain had been less attentive. Obviously concerned and possibly alerted by another boarder, he walked unannounced into the young women's room one afternoon and discovered his son on the bed unclothed, lying between the two women. Ritchie was immediately told to dress and return to his room where he waited fearfully for his father. John Thain returned a short time later but did not speak of the incident or punish him; nor did Ritchie see the two women again.

A Father's Decline

The years 1930 to 1932 were not easy ones financially for John Thain but Ritchie was content enough. Aside from his interest in sport, John Thain was quite politically minded and engaged in lively conversations with like-minded friends and associates – or anyone who would listen or engage with him. This seemed to have stemmed from his early days working in the paper mill in Aberdeen where he created a stir by trying to force the owners to provide better working conditions for all workers. This very quickly cost him his job although he was soon reinstated due to the uproar from the workers on the floor. Nonetheless, he resigned his position soon after to pursue the less labour-intensive role at the stationers. Ritchie vividly remembers the strikes and riots, and the damage and broken windows sustained to the buildings on the Wellington streets in 1932. The so-called Depression Riots were a reflection of the workers' anger at the

government of the time who they blamed for the high level of unemployment. John Thain's sympathies lay with the activists and Ritchie recalls watching his father heatedly berate the Prime Minister, George Forbes, and the Minister of Finance, Gordon Coates, in a fish and chip shop situated close to Parliament. Ritchie felt frightened for the outcome as his father angrily waved his walking stick at the two ministers while fiercely criticising their policies. Fortunately for all concerned, this only resulted in the removal of the walking stick and his father from the premises by the shop owner.

Over the next two years, John Thain's health gradually deteriorated. He had been diagnosed with diabetes some years previously and Ritchie was often called on to administer his daily insulin injections. John Thain had enjoyed smoking tobacco in his pipe for too long to relinquish the habit but this was also having a negative impact on his health. Whilst Ritchie continued to attend The Terrace, his father was finding it increasingly difficult to run the struggling business as a going concern, in part due to his failing health. In the hope that business might improve, he had kept both the Howes and Ritchie businesses registered but towards the end of 1930, after advice from his lawyer, John Thain agreed that the ailing Ritchie Bros should be wound up. In fact, the company had first considered voluntary liquidation in 1927 but it was not until 13 July 1931 that it was finally struck off the companies register and dissolved.

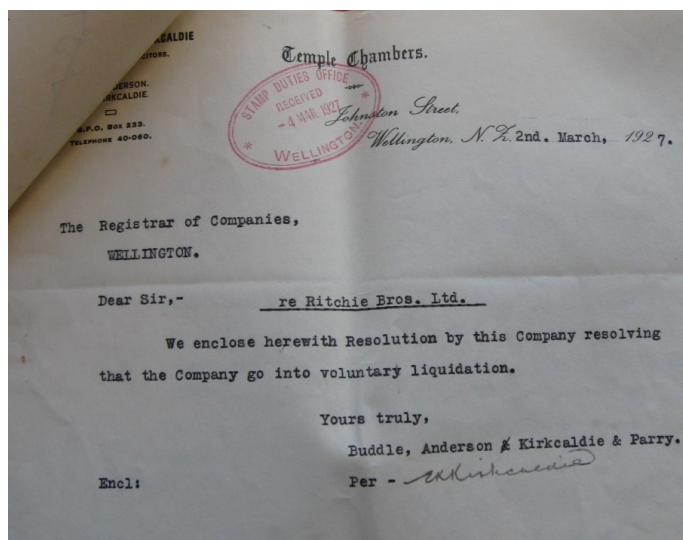


Figure 15: Letter to Registrar of Companies advising of Ritchie Brothers intent to go into voluntary liquidation. Used with permission.

The motor car had long since been sold and monies gone. Ritchie was aware his father was becoming weaker but the older man never broached the subject of his poor health or what might happen to his son in the future. The times that they had spent together in the office during the week or at the sports ground on Saturday cheering on their favourite team were gone. Few people came to their home and aside from his fellow schoolmates and teachers, Ritchie spent little time with anyone apart from his father.

In the early months of 1934 John Thain was admitted to Wellington hospital. His son was left at the boarding house where the landlady kept a distant eye on him. By this time twelve year old Ritchie was a quiet and independent boy, and he would walk the approximately four miles to visit his father at prescribed days and times. Few words were said between them and an uneasy silence would often fall; his father was struggling to breathe and had little energy left to engage in conversation. Complications arising from diabetes and the effects of tuberculosis had by this time ravaged his body. On 14 August 1934 Ritchie arrived home from school where the rather sombre landlady advised him to go immediately to the hospital. Upon arrival he sat and waited for further instructions. After what seemed like an interminable time of between two to three hours, a nurse arrived to advise him that his father had died. Without any time to fully comprehend the news, he was immediately asked if he would like to see his father. Alone, without any support, he was unsure of what he should do but there was no time to reflect on the matter, and fearing the unknown, he declined. It was a decision that he regretted throughout his life.

The next few days until his father's funeral were a blur for Ritchie. He was aware of the murmurings of those around him who were discussing his fate. His father's lawyer came to the house and spoke to the landlady in hushed tones before attending to John Thain's belongings. He was gentle with Ritchie, expressing his sympathy but Ritchie's youth meant that he was not consulted on any matters relating to his father's estate or in fact his own future. John Thain Ritchie's service and cremation took place at Karori cemetery on 17 August 1934 with only his son, the landlady and his lawyer in attendance.

BDM 108

New Zealand Death Certificate

Registration Number
1934012535

DECEASED

| | |
|---|---|
| First/given name(s) Surname/family name | John Ritchie |
| <small>(f different from above)</small> First/given name(s) at birth Surname/family name at birth | - - |
| Date of death Place of death Cause or causes of death <small>(as specified in doctor's certificate or coroner's order)</small> | 14 August 1934 Wellington Hospital from 18 Hobson Street Wellington Diabetes Mellitus Pulmonary Tuberculosis |

| | |
|---|--|
| Name of certifying doctor Date last seen alive by certifying doctor | J C Sutherland 14 August 1934 |
| Sex Age and date of birth Place of birth If not born in New Zealand number of years lived here Usual home address | Male 59 years Not Recorded Aberdeen Scotland 27 - |
| Usual occupation, profession or job Date of burial or cremation Place of burial or cremation Age of each daughter Age of each son | Company Manager 17 August 1934 Cremated At Karori - - |

PARENTS


| | |
|---|--|
| MOTHER: First/given name(s) Surname/family name <small>(f different from above)</small> First/given name(s) at birth Surname/family name at birth | Joan Ritchie - Grant |
| FATHER: First/given name(s) Surname/family name <small>(f different from above)</small> First/given name(s) at birth Surname/family name at birth | Alexander Ritchie - - |

RELATIONSHIP(S)

| | |
|---|--|
| Relationship status at time of death Relationship type Age of deceased at event Place of marriage/civil union SPOUSE/ First/given name(s) PARTNER: Surname/family name Sex Age (if living) | Not Recorded - 30 Aberdeen Scotland Isabella Sim - 64 |
|---|--|

Certified true copy of particulars recorded by a Registrar

Issued under the seal of the Registrar on **17 August 2010**



CAUTION - Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses it as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution under the Crimes Act 1961.

Figure 16: John Thain Ritchie's death certificate copy. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Ritchie spent one last night in the room he had shared with his father for the last two years before he arose the next morning and prepared to leave. Armed with the tickets which the lawyer had given him the day before, he walked down to the harbour and boarded the ferry to Picton. He was used to travelling, as he had done this many times with his father during the school holidays while John Thain conducted business dealings, and he was unfazed by this aspect of the journey.

From Picton he travelled alone by train the seven hundred kilometres south to Dunedin. On the platform at Dunedin station he recognized his uncle, Thomas Ritchie, who was waiting to greet him. Together they travelled in relative silence

as Thomas drove the ten or so miles to Michie Street. Joan Ritchie had died two years previously at the age of ninety-two but to Ritchie who was used to only his father and himself for company, the house seemed full of people and he was very conscious of being an interloper in an already large family. He had been given a bed in a room with some of the other children, a place which had been vacated by Herbert (b. 1932) the youngest family member, who was now consigned to sleeping in his parents' room.

With one term of the school year left, Ritchie was enrolled at Arthur Street School where his cousins Sandy and Alan attended. He had enjoyed being amongst the top students for his year academically at The Terrace but he was unnerved to find that a number of students at Arthur Street School, including his cousin, were succeeding at a much higher level than he. Ritchie was initially somewhat deflated by this, but he decided to apply himself and work harder at his studies. Very soon his diligence paid off and his grades improved markedly.

Thomas Ritchie's family were regular church goers at the Roslyn Presbyterian Church and Ritchie accompanied them on their weekly attendances. He enjoyed the family atmosphere and took pride in his uncle's position as the church organist.



Figure 17: Ritchie at Roslyn Church, Dunedin in 2009.

He did not take much notice of the services; his father had been an atheist and the sermons were of little interest, but he did enjoy the music and singing which reminded him of his days at Croydon. He was not aware if music featured prominently at Arthur Street but he was taken, along with other similar aged children from the school, to visit King Edward Technical College during the term where a demonstration of the school's music was taking place. The visit left an impression on him, but neither this, nor the pleasant church singing inspired him to participate further in musical activities at that time.

As the last few months of 1934 passed, Ritchie became aware that his living situation was only temporary. Once again his future was under scrutiny and as before, he was not privy to any of the discussions around this. The current arrangement had been made hurriedly following John Thain's death but now that some time had lapsed, it appeared a more permanent solution needed to be found. It is difficult to fathom that one extra body could have made such a difference to the household but with a family of eight, and Robert Ritchie ensconced in the sleep-out, it is conceivable that Ritchie's presence put too much strain on the household. The circumstances of Ritchie's birth may also have been an impediment; John Thain's wife Isabelle and daughter Audrey were still very much a part of the family's lives.

Chapter 3: Shaping a career in music

King Edward Technical College

The passing of Christmas in 1934 was unmemorable but the journey to Otira to spend the summer holidays with relations on his mother's side held significance as marking the emergence of John Ritchie, composer. The musical seeds had been sown – the days at The Terrace singing from the *Dominion Songbook* with Mr Goldman and his uncle's organ playing in church – from which ideas began to form in Ritchie's imagination. As he sat alone on the train with pen and paper a tune came to mind. Ritchie wanted to preserve it but he did not know how to notate it. Mulling over this conundrum he came up with the idea of a number system which he could use to write down the melody for recall. Since he had no knowledge of note names, he used the numbers one to eight for each pitch, imagining one as being the first note (in a major key). He committed the rhythm to memory and intuitively worked out the intervals, writing each number of the tune's corresponding tone until completed. It was, in effect, his first composition. Within just three years, he would have the skill and knowledge to write a work that could be recognised and performed as a musical piece, and his first notated song would be published.⁵¹

Arthur Harrison lived near Arthurs Pass with his wife, Ivy, and young daughter June. He was the local school teacher, a pianist (and later radio actor) and to Ritchie was lively and fun. Ritchie was welcomed and treated well and he enjoyed listening to Uncle Arthur play on the family piano although possibly awed by Arthur's apparent musical skill, did not venture further with his own musical ideas. The atmosphere in their home was a far cry from the environment Ritchie had inhabited in the previous few years of his life. Nonetheless he knew that this was simply a holiday while permanent arrangements were being made for the remaining years of his childhood. His father had died leaving nothing in the way

⁵¹ *The Beauty of Water* for voice and piano was published in the Dunedin Technical High School (DTHS) Magazine, 1.4 (1937), p. 17.

of financial support for him and he was therefore dependant on the good will of others. He was not concerned that he would be abandoned but he felt a heightened sense of responsibility for his own future, a growing self-reliance which remained with him from that moment on.

He returned to Dunedin and was immediately taken to Jessie's sister Elsie and her husband Fred Barnes. Fred worked at the railways and the family, like many of the time, had limited resources and barely enough to survive; certainly there were no non-essentials. Elsie and Fred had a daughter, Joan, who was only five years old when Ritchie arrived and with such a difference in their ages, the two children spent little time together. In any event Ritchie was used to spending time on his own and was reserved in manner. He was very mindful that his relations had taken him in under straitened circumstances and was grateful for their charity; however there was little comfort or warmth in the relationship and a familial bond did not develop.

At the start of the 1935 school year, thirteen year old Ritchie began as a pupil at King Edward Technical College (also known as Dunedin High School), retrospectively the most noteworthy event in Ritchie's short life to date, and one that would change the course of his future.



Figure 18: Frontage of King Edward Technical College, 2009.

It was a peculiar set of circumstances that brought Ritchie to Dunedin and the Barnes's home which ultimately led to his musical career. There were however other events at play which had to coincide for this to happen, and these revolved around one man and his life, namely Thomas Vernon Griffiths. Rachael Hawkey's thesis on the life of Vernon Griffiths contains a full biographical account on which the following summary is primarily based.

Cameo – Thomas Vernon Griffiths



Figure 19: Vernon Griffiths in the grounds of King Edward Technical College. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Thomas Vernon Griffiths (1894-1985) was born in Cheshire, England but spent most of his school years growing up in relatively comfortable surroundings in Norwich. He was the eldest of six children to John Herbert Griffiths and his wife Clara Augusta Isabel Vernon. Herbert had given up his career as a chemist to enter the ministry and it is thought that Vernon Griffiths's exposure to his father's involvement with the poor in the Norwich slums was a contributing factor in his decision to immigrate to New Zealand several years later. Vernon Griffiths attended Norwich Grammar School where music was an integral part of school life,

and a music scholarship provided him with the means to become a proficient pianist, organist, and composer.

Griffiths worked briefly in The Bank of England before he was sent overseas as Second Lieutenant with the Sherwood Foresters when war broke out but he was invalided home in 1918 after suffering the effects of a gas shell. Following a period of convalescence, he was offered an organ scholarship which provided him with the means to study for a Bachelor of Arts (History) and Bachelor of Music at Cambridge. He subsequently accepted a teaching post at Downside, a small

Catholic school in Somerset with no music tradition where he was able to help diversify and expand the activities in the curriculum.

The disapproval shown by Griffiths's family and friends when he expressed a desire to convert to Catholicism however forced him to find employment elsewhere and after one year he resigned from Downside to take up a position at St Edmunds, an Anglican school in Canterbury. Music was well-established at the school; however he modernised the choral repertoire, introduced the Trinity College of London syllabus as a basis for instrumental tuition, and extended performance opportunities for singers and players. He remained at the school until his departure from his home country at the end of 1926 to take up an appointment as lecturer of music at Christchurch Training College, New Zealand.

Griffiths was one of four newly appointed music lecturers in the New Zealand training colleges, one in each of the main cities of the time: Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. His position was a dual one as Director of Music in Schools in Canterbury and lecturer to trainee teachers. It was envisaged that music would become a fundamental part of school life and it was deemed necessary that a multi-pronged approach was required to implement this. Griffiths's self-proclaimed focus was for every child to receive musical training and participate in both choral and instrumental group performances. Much of his work was highly regarded and he worked tirelessly supporting community initiatives as well as attending to his paid roles. Griffiths had both supporters and critics during his six-year tenure in Christchurch. Some of the criticism was directed at his all-English repertoire for choirs and instrumentalists alike while a cluster of established music teachers believed the affordable Saturday music lessons for school children aimed at group participation which he had implemented deprived them of private pupils and thus their livelihood.

As previously stated, New Zealand did not escape the effects of the world-wide economic depression in the 1930s. As part of cost-saving measures by the government of the day, two of the music lectureship roles in the training colleges were scrapped. Although Christchurch retained its position, Vernon Griffiths did

not as it was deemed only fair that the post be given to the now redundant Wellington lecturer, Ernest Jenner, due to his marital (with children) status; government employment policy of the day favoured married men with children over single men.⁵² Griffiths declined an offer of a position as music master at Christchurch Boys' High School where he had assisted over the previous few years, choosing instead to accept a similar role at Dunedin Technical High School.

The school was part of a larger institution known as King Edward Technical College which incorporated the day school, evening classes, the Senior School of Commerce, and the Dunedin School of Art. Griffiths's appointment was not straightforward, as noted in correspondence between the principal of the Technical College, W. Aldridge, and Griffiths. On 13 December 1932, Aldridge approached Griffiths directly by letter. He referred to the imminent loss of Griffiths's position in Christchurch and asked him to consider a proposal with regards to a specialist music teacher at King Edward Technical College. The appointment would also require teaching History and English and was explained as a year's experiment. After that time it was expected that the school would decide if it should invest in a sole music teacher, and a case might then be put forward to the Teachers' Board.⁵³

On his arrival at the college, Griffiths was able to implement his method which ensured that all students would sing, rehearse, and perform together. To make this possible he determined that classes should consist of like-voices. Auditions were held to assist this process in which Griffiths listened briefly to each of the seven

⁵² David Sell, 'Jenner, Ernest Albert Frederick', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (1998), in *The Encyclopedia of New Zealand* <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4j6/jenner-ernest-albert-frederick>> [accessed 18 July 2019].

⁵³ Hawkey, R., p. 64, 69.; Griffiths's appointment, however, was not as straightforward as it appeared. In a letter from the Director of Education to the Technical School Principal dated 22 December 1932, the Director suggests that the school offers Griffiths a temporary appointment of three months only after which time they could decide if such an arrangement would benefit the school long term. On 10 October 1933 the Principal sent a memorandum to the Director of Education advising that the Appointments Committee had agreed unanimously to Griffiths's permanent appointment and would not be advertising the position. 'King Edward Technical High School: Records', Dunedin, Hocken Collections Te Uare Taoka o Hākena, Staff F/2 - Notices G/3 (1931 - 1938), AG-763-008/009.

hundred students. This was not the only consideration however as course types and subject selection also had to be factored in. Courses included technical, commercial, and academic. Each contained specific subjects aimed at a particular employment opportunity or, as in the case of academic, lead to further study at tertiary level. The music method could not impede a student's progress in his or her study path; rather it was intended to enrich and broaden their life experience. Whilst most children benefited musically from their experiences under Griffiths's tutelage, there were of course some students who were unable to pitch or grasp an understanding of rhythm. Griffiths was determined that children who did not meet his musical standards should not be excluded from performances; they were given non-musical roles such as organising, setting up the stage, and ushering.

In addition to choral singing, Griffiths was keen for as many students as possible to learn an instrument and to perform in small ensembles in preparation for participating in the school orchestra. To this end, lessons were arranged and managed by Griffiths with the assistance of two other staff members and supplemented by visiting teachers. Lessons were not, in fact, free; an enrolment form which stated that a tuition fee of five shillings per term was payable for orchestra and instrumental classes was provided to each family. Students were expected to provide their own instrument and suggestions were made as to how this could be done. This included borrowing from friends or purchasing their own either second hand or new. Messrs Begg's was recommended for the purchase of new instruments, in particular violins, cellos, cornets, and clarinets. A rather curious note on the document stated that 'Clarinets are excellent instruments for boys'. Any student enrolled in these class lessons would join the orchestra in term two for no additional cost.

Whilst there were some exceptions, including it could be argued Ritchie, most of the students who achieved a superior degree of technical accomplishment in music were those already taking private lessons prior to commencing high school. These students were able to lead in their section and promote excellence in performance from the outset, playing to a much higher level than the majority of pupils who began their lessons at high school. Griffiths's arrangements of the

works performed, however, ensured that all members were valued; beginners and those less proficient were given simple inner parts which they could learn to play well in the body of the orchestra.

High School Years

When Ritchie began his secondary studies in 1935, Griffiths's position as music master was assured, and his methods for teaching music had been established. It was a feat, given the short time he had been there and it was both Griffiths's previous experience and the willingness of the college and the principal to embrace his system that made it possible. Ritchie's first day was, as for all the new students, an initiation into a particular style of class streaming unique in New Zealand. He stood in front of the music master and was invited to sing while Griffiths accompanied quietly on the piano, listening attentively. At the end of his audition Griffiths advised him that he would sing high voice in the treble choir and then asked him which instrument he would like to learn. Ritchie had limited knowledge of instruments other than the organ and piano and so indicated his preference for piano.

During the ensuing discussion, Ritchie disclosed that he did not have the means to take private lessons to which Griffiths advised that it would then be very difficult for him to learn. The first lesson was a revelation for Ritchie. The thirty students in the class were taught the practical and theoretical aspects of piano at their desks with a cardboard cut-out keyboard as an aid. Children were given instruction on the note names of the piano and then learnt by placing their fingers on the appropriate keys. The only instrument was the piano which the teacher used to demonstrate with, and there were too many children for each to have a turn at playing the instrument. This innovative but to Ritchie unsatisfactory arrangement did not satisfy his awakening interest in music and after a few of these lessons he approached Griffiths and asked if there was another instrument he might try. Griffiths studied him solemnly for a while before responding: 'A little boy like you? Well...I think you should learn the clarinet'.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 29 May 2007.

Ritchie's knowledge of music and instruments was still slight but he was very happy to go along with Griffiths's suggestion. Since instruments had already been allotted for the year there were few instruments of any type available and Ritchie was forced to wait until a clarinet could be found for him. At the time, Ritchie was not aware that there was a charge incurred for lessons and that students would ideally provide their own instruments. In any event it is highly unlikely that Ritchie's uncle and aunt could have afforded to pay either the five shillings enrolment fee or the purchase of an instrument. He accepted Griffiths's assurance on the matter that he would advise him as soon as an instrument came to hand. It could be reasonably assumed that Griffiths saw a particular talent and enthusiasm in Ritchie he wanted to foster, and it was not long before he sourced an E-flat clarinet from a regimental band for Ritchie to use. In all probability Griffiths paid for both instrument and lessons and once Ritchie had moved on to a standard B-flat instrument, the smaller clarinet was put into the school's instrument pool. It was only in his last years at Dunedin High School that Ritchie became aware of Griffiths's personal generosity to him and other students who were similarly placed.



Figure 20: Ritchie playing the clarinet. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Ritchie's experience at the institution may not have been unique but it was certainly unusual for a thirteen year old student with limited exposure to music and without formal training, to show such promise which transformed itself into exceptional musical skill and leadership over the course of three to four years. From the first introduction to music instruction and the compulsory class singing lessons, Ritchie was acutely aware that music was a field he would like to work in. At the time this was not perceived as a real possibility considering his domestic situation; he needed to become self-sufficient quickly so as not to burden his aunt and uncle any longer than was necessary. Notwithstanding, he was inspired to work hard to become accomplished at music, and learn as much as he could from Griffiths's teaching.



Figure 21: Ritchie with the King Edward Technical College Orchestra: middle of second row, seventh from right or left. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Music aside, Ritchie laboured hard at his school work. Motivated by the knowledge that he alone would soon be responsible for his welfare, he was determined to achieve the best that he could in order to provide a reasonable income for himself. Prior to his father's illness and subsequent death, Ritchie had expected that he would work with his father and eventually take over the paper

business. To that end he had already acquired some skill in accounting and mathematics. Mark sheets completed by teachers illustrate his diligence and intelligence; in 1935 in a class of thirty-six he rose from a fourth-ranked placing overall mid-year to second by December.⁵⁵

By 1936 Ritchie's enthusiasm and aptitude for music theory and ensemble membership were noted. He was an industrious and reliable student whose conduct was beyond reproach but yet without means to continue his education. His class placement, a Commercial class C2b indicated the direction he was expected to take.⁵⁶ Class sizes diminished significantly from the beginning of the second year of high school as many students left to pursue training or work-related activities. Ritchie was amongst those expected to now find employment and part way through his fourth form year he was sent to a solicitor's office to be interviewed for the position of office clerk. Perhaps because of his small stature, he appeared younger than his fourteen years and thankfully, Ritchie was not the preferred candidate. A second interview at another firm for a similar position also proved unsuccessful.

Steps to a Career in Music

This was the catalyst for significant intervention by Griffiths and which assured Ritchie of continuing with his music studies and complete his higher school education. In time a new post of music librarian was created at the school to which Ritchie was appointed. His duties initially involved storing, documenting, and distributing the choral and instrumental music as needed by Griffiths. Over time this developed into a more substantial role which included part writing, and the care and lending of instruments. The position commanded a stipend although Ritchie did not personally receive any monetary reward; he assumed this was paid directly to the Barnes family.

⁵⁵ Ritchie papers, School Reports folder.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Ritchie continued to be placed in a Commercial Course class in 1936 and 1937 but, with the inclusion of French as an extra subject, there were already indications that a broader education than that generally received by commerce students was being undertaken by Ritchie. The move away from a career in commerce was notably apparent when, in 1937, he attended Band in place of Commerce, Bookkeeping was dropped and he studied Intermediate Music Theory in a Friday afternoon class. In 1938, Ritchie was focussed on an academic course and heading towards matriculation (University Entrance). To that end his subjects included English, Arithmetic, Mathematics (Algebra and Geometry), Chemistry, Geography, Music and French. He achieved an overall ranking of first in his class. His final year was spent studying English, Mathematics, Geography, French and Music.

| <p>ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY:</p> <p>Late.....times. Absent.....0.....half-days.</p> <p>GAMES: <i>He plays a very good game of tennis and is 3rd on the tennis ladder.</i></p> <p>DRILL: <i>His drill is good</i></p> | | <p>DUNEDIN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL</p> <p>Commercial Course</p> <p><i>3rd</i> Year</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|--|
| <p>PHYSICAL MEASUREMENTS:</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>At date of Report.</th><th>Increase since February.</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>HEIGHT</td><td><i>5 ft. 3 3/4 in.</i></td><td><i>2 in.</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>WEIGHT</td><td><i>108 lb.</i></td><td><i>8 lb.</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>EXPANDED CHEST</td><td><i>32 in.</i></td><td><i>- in.</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>CHEST EXPANSION</td><td><i>4 3/4 in.</i></td><td><i>1/4 in.</i></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A minus sign placed before a number in the last column indicates a decrease.</p> <p>The following remarks on general physique and state of health include any points that were raised at the medical inspection of second-year pupils:—</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p><i>O.P. Stephens</i> Class Teacher.</p> | | | At date of Report. | Increase since February. | HEIGHT | <i>5 ft. 3 3/4 in.</i> | <i>2 in.</i> | WEIGHT | <i>108 lb.</i> | <i>8 lb.</i> | EXPANDED CHEST | <i>32 in.</i> | <i>- in.</i> | CHEST EXPANSION | <i>4 3/4 in.</i> | <i>1/4 in.</i> | <p>REPORT</p> <p>on</p> <p><i>John Ritchie</i></p> <p>for <i>Second</i> Half-year, 1937</p> <p>In general, the standard of marking is so regulated that the following inferences may be drawn, and should be drawn unless qualifying remarks are written:—</p> <p>Marks well over 60% indicate very good work;</p> <p>From 53% upwards, a clear pass;</p> <p>Down to 47%, a doubtful pass;</p> <p>Still lower marks, a standard below that expected in the course.</p> <p>Any pupil, on leaving after a stay of a year, may receive a copy of his or her School Record. For the compilation of that Record the School may demand to see half-yearly reports.</p> <p>No other copy of this report can be supplied.</p> | |
| | At date of Report. | Increase since February. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HEIGHT | <i>5 ft. 3 3/4 in.</i> | <i>2 in.</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WEIGHT | <i>108 lb.</i> | <i>8 lb.</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EXPANDED CHEST | <i>32 in.</i> | <i>- in.</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CHEST EXPANSION | <i>4 3/4 in.</i> | <i>1/4 in.</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 22: Ritchie's end of year school report front and back, 1937. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Name John Ritchie Class: C3
 CLASS RESULTS: December 1937

| LIST OF SUBJECTS. | Rank in Class. | Marks gained by Pupil. | Average Marks of Class. | Number in Class. |
|---|----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| GENERAL .. ENGLISH .. | 9= | 54 | 54 | 18 |
| CIVICS AND HISTORY .. | | | | |
| ARITHMETIC .. | 2= | 77 | 55 | 11 |
| ALGEBRA AND GEOMETRY .. | 2 | 63 | 44 | 10 |
| ELEMENTARY PHYSICS .. | | | | |
| CHEMISTRY .. | 1= | 73 | 58 | 7 |
| HYGIENE AND HOME SCIENCE .. | | | | |
| PRACTICAL .. NEEDLEWORK OR DRESSMAKING .. | | | | |
| COOKERY AND HOUSECRAFT .. | | | | |
| DRAWING AND LETTERING .. | 3 | 60 | 61 | 6 |
| DESIGN AND CRAFTWORK .. | | | | |
| WOODWORK .. | | | | |
| COMMERCIAL .. GEOGRAPHY .. | 7= | 33 | 42 | 8 |
| SHORTHAND THEORY .. | | | | |
| COMMERCE .. | | | | |
| TYPEWRITING .. | | | | |
| BOOK-KEEPING .. | | | | |
| EXTRA ... Pract. Geom. | 3 | 59 | 54 | 8 |
| French. | 2 | 52 | 41 | 4 |

Final Rank in Class.....

NOTE.—To ensure the retention of a Free Place, a pupil on leaving School should enrol in Evening Classes without delay.

TIME TESTS:
 Shorthand Speed: words per minute
 Typewriting Speed: words per minute
 under these conditions:—
 SHORTHAND—Transcript after 5 minutes of dictation, with not more than 2% of errors.
 TYPEWRITING—10 minutes of copying, with not more than one error per minute.

CONDUCT AND PROGRESS:
There has been a slight falling off in his average, largely owing to a weakness in Geography, but his general results are very good indeed, when allied with his keen interest and work in the orchestra and band.
His conduct is very good.

FREE PLACE:

A. C. Stephens Class Teacher.
W. G. Anderson Principal.

Figure 23: Ritchie's end of year school report inner, 1937. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Over the course of his first two years at high school Ritchie had become increasingly convinced he wanted to pursue a career in music but was at a loss as to how this might be accomplished. He thrived in his music studies and worked hard, acquiring a good standard as a chorister and clarinet player in a short time. He had become caught up in Griffiths's enormous enthusiasm that was conveyed to the students and which permeated throughout the entire school. Initially Ritchie accrued his musical knowledge through singing, playing the E-flat clarinet in group lessons and performances together with his individual practice which provided the stimulus for his newly awakened musicality. At some point, on Griffiths's advice, he joined a choir, singing in the bass section of a local Anglican Church choir, St Matthew's on Hope Street, Dunedin, at around the time his voice was breaking. Griffiths's rationale for suggesting this to Ritchie was that it was the best way to learn about harmony. Ritchie not only enjoyed the singing; by listening to the religious teachings, he began, for the first time, to ponder his

own beliefs, and where they might fit into the particular sermons and lessons being delivered.

Ritchie's achievements in music did not go unnoticed and at the start of the new school year in 1937 Griffiths invited Ritchie to his music theory classes which Griffiths taught as part of the Technical College's evening class programme. Interested students from any school could apply and were accepted on the basis of prior musical knowledge and experience followed by a meeting with Griffiths. Each Friday evening, the small group gathered to learn the theoretical aspects of music including harmony, orchestration and composing. Texts included books by Gordon Jacob amongst others and Griffiths augmented these with practical examples on the piano. Students were encouraged to engage in discussion based around the studied musical works and were given harmonic and contrapuntal exercises to complete. These were both marked under the terms of the harmonic rules which applied, and then played on the piano to provide an aural awareness and appreciation for the written work.

Vernon Griffiths's generosity in imparting his musical knowledge was spoken of by both Ritchie and class participant Clare Peach (née Neale). Peach recalled Griffiths's vitality and enthusiasm during the evening classes, his attention to detail with each student's efforts and his awareness of those who showed particular ability in specific areas. Notwithstanding the monumental task he undertook to involve all of the college's students, he would identify and work further with those whom he believed to be talented in a particular area. Such was his presence that all were eager to please him and everyone worked hard to attain the results which he assured them they could achieve. Ritchie was singled out particularly for his musical ability in composing and arranging, and his leadership qualities. According to Peach, Ritchie was confident in any of the roles which Griffiths assigned him including taking some of the sectional practices for both choir and instrumental groups. These learnt skills were to prove invaluable for his future career.

Ritchie got on well with his fellow class mates and formed close bonds with some of the boys in his form classes and music groups. Several of these friendships were with musically like-minded students such as two clarinet players Leonard White and Johnny McCaw. McCaw had been taught by his father, Jack McCaw, a jazz musician who was a skilled saxophonist and clarinettist, and the young McCaw was thus an experienced and practised player by the time Ritchie began at King Edward Technical College. A few years older than Ritchie, he had skill and flair that singled him out above other players. For a time Ritchie believed himself to be a very good clarinet player but realised that McCaw had a talent and exceptional ability that put him beyond anything that he could ever hope to achieve. McCaw went on to become a full time musician, performing, teaching and recording and holding positions in various orchestras including principal clarinet for the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Like Ritchie, Leonard White had begun learning the clarinet at High School. He, too, showed great musical talent and ability and in the last year at school, White and Ritchie were paired to perform a duet for the annual school music concert.

Like most children of his era, Ritchie walked everywhere and maintained a high level of fitness in normal everyday life. Notwithstanding his small stature, Ritchie continued his early life's passion for sport. Golf was not an option for him at this time but there were various team sports in which he actively participated including hockey and cricket. He was a quick thinker and fast runner, qualities which secured his place in a number of teams and later earned him a blue in hockey. During his high school years he spent little time with the Ritchie family and only occasionally with any extended family on his mother's side; it seemed that neither paternal nor maternal family members were particularly keen to acknowledge him. With minimal family social time, and interaction with his aunt and uncle kept to simple every day pleasantries, most of Ritchie's life centred on school and music, the latter increasingly occupying his thoughts as well as his leisure time. His enthusiasm encompassed all aspects of music including theory, history and performance. He delighted in playing the clarinet and was often seen sitting cross legged outside in the school grounds or against the house at home, instrument in hand. Ritchie was acutely aware that it was Griffiths's dedication

and selfless intervention that had brought about such a dramatic and unforeseen change to his circumstances and outlook. Without sufficient means he was nevertheless unable to fully develop a plan for his future but he knew that it was one in which music would play a central part.

Griffiths's influence extended well beyond the parameters of the school environment. In 1929 Griffiths had established the Christchurch Training College Music scheme, a programme of instrumental classes for children on Saturday mornings. Costs were kept to a minimum so that children from all backgrounds could participate in music making. Under the auspices of a music extension programme, Griffiths arranged a holiday camp for a group of boys who participated in these classes. Approximately twenty boys and three adults, including Griffiths, travelled to Akaroa, a small town on Banks Peninsula, about eighty kilometres southeast of Christchurch, during the summer holidays. The boys were keen music makers and came from families who could not afford a break away from home over the Christmas period which many others in New Zealand society at the time enjoyed. The group participated in some musical activities but much of their time was spent engaged in recreational activities such as walking and outdoor games.

Griffiths implemented a comparable event in Dunedin which Ritchie was invited to attend during the 1935 to 1936 summer holiday break. Similar in outlook to Akaroa, Purakaunui boasted a bay against a backdrop of hills with ample walking areas for the boys to enjoy nature and the outdoors. Transport to the bay was by train or car, and row boat from one side of the bay to the other.⁵⁷ Instruments were brought to the camp and in the evenings Griffiths would direct the group as they performed together, the social nature of the event and congenial surroundings bringing a relaxed atmosphere to the gathering.

A by-product of the particular class streaming system which the school adopted during the Griffiths years was that junior classes were often single-sex, an unusual

⁵⁷ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 29 May 2007.

practice within a state co-education school unless this occurred by reason of course selection; for example students enrolled in engineering tended to be boys. The large number of students who left school to enter the work force before the end of their second high school year, however, meant much lower enrolments for the senior classes. These smaller streamed groups were then amalgamated to form mixed classes. Ritchie's lack of contact with a wider family circle and friends meant that he generally felt shy in the presence of girls his own age although this may not have been immediately apparent. Former class mate Clare Peach recalled that she was in awe of Ritchie and was herself quite reserved in his presence; his superior musical abilities and his position as Griffiths's assistant generated a distance between him and the general student population.

The success of the music camps was such that weekend trips soon took place throughout the year and on occasion an invitation was extended to the musically involved senior girls to join in. They arrived separately, accompanied by a female adult, likely one of the girls' mothers. Selected activities were run separately; however planned musical evenings and some leisure times and games were jointly enjoyed by both the young men and women. On 15 May 1936 during one of these excursions, next to a table tennis table at a cottage rented by Griffiths, Ritchie first met his future wife, Anita Proctor.



Figure 24: Ritchie in 2009 outside the cottage in Purakaunui where he met his wife, Anita Proctor.

Although both Anita and Ritchie were pupils at the school, Anita was a year ahead of Ritchie and their paths had not crossed in any significant way. Anita was, to Ritchie, statuesque and much more mature and confident than he was. In fact Anita's School Record dated 16 December 1936 notes: 'Her abilities and her confident and capable manner are liable to give the impression that she is older [...] than she really is'.⁵⁸

Anita was a musician in her own right, having taken private singing lessons for several years, and was a soloist for the First Church of Otago Dunedin choir. Once their friendship was established, Ritchie regularly attended the church's Sunday services and sat upstairs in the dress circle to watch and listen to Anita sing. He sometimes took along his own school work in order to study during the less interesting parts of the service. Over time, Anita and Ritchie discussed religion at length and eventually decided to move to the Anglican Cathedral, St Pauls, in the Octagon, where they later married.



Figure 25: John Ritchie and Anita Proctor.
Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

⁵⁸ Ritchie papers, School Reports folder.

Over the course of Ritchie's first year in the evening theory classes, composition was introduced; a natural progression which followed on from the harmony exercises. The students were tasked with writing small pieces which were then performed, usually by class participants and sometimes accompanied by Griffiths. Griffiths's critiquing of these efforts included encouragement, suggestions, and, ultimately, assessments of these works. In early 1937 it was announced that a composition music prize for Best Original Song was to be awarded and included in the school's academic and sporting prizes, thanks to an anonymous benefactor. Ritchie collaborated with Anita to compose a song for soprano with piano accompaniment using her poem *The Beauty of Water*. Griffiths later assisted with the revision of the work. How the final result differed from Ritchie's original score is not known although Griffiths certainly helped all of the students in a similar manner.

Verses by ANITA PROCTOR. THE BEAUTY OF WATER. Music by JOHN RITCHIE [revised]

Moderato mf

mp

L.H.

mf

rit

mf

a tempo

fall, how mar-vel-lous a thing! Of Moth-er Na-ture's for-ces great; Vast, depths lim-it-less and cool; Its weeds a-float in, seek-ing man, its

this has true-est ring Of ma-jes-ty, as heav'n-wards its sil-v'ry spray is On - at lim-pid pool. It's might-y waves whose spray is flung 'gainst cliff and

whirl'd, O'er jut-ting cliffs and shelv-ing crags its Cat-ar-acts are hurled. shore; The foam-ing deep holds sec-ets which are hid for ev-er-move.

8 17

Figure 26: John Ritchie, *The Beauty of Water*. Ritchie's first published composition, 1937. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Adjudicator Dr V. E. Galway judged the entries and considered Ritchie's work to be worthy of first prize: 'His melody has distinction, and shows that he has made good progress in his study of harmony'. He awarded second place and prize, donated by a second sponsor, to Leonard White while Anita, who was in her final school year, received a commended award for her entry. Ritchie's song in the form of a beautifully handwritten score, believed to be crafted by Griffiths, was published in the school magazine the following year.

Ritchie continued to compose and attend the Friday music classes until he left school. His musical expertise increasingly developed and his diligence never waned. He won the music prize for the subsequent two years: *A Lullaby* for voice and piano in 1938, and *Album Leaf* for piano in 1939. Fellow student Clare Peach was awarded third and second place respectively for those two years.

A LULLABY. John Ritchie [arr.]

Gently and Softly

mp a tempo

Lul-la-by, Ah! Lul-la-by, Birds sleep soft-ly in the

nest, Ev'ning breez-es gent-ly sigh As they too sink soon to rest

2. Now the moon o'er land and sea
Sheds its light of silvery hue,
Gently shines on flow'r and tree,
Sends a beam so soft for you.

3 Lullaby, Ah! Lullaby,
Lambs and birds and children sleep,
Wrapped in slumber gently lie,
While the moon safe watch doth keep.
Anon..

21

Figure 27: John Ritchie, *A Lullaby*. Published in the Dunedin Technical High School Magazine, 1938. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

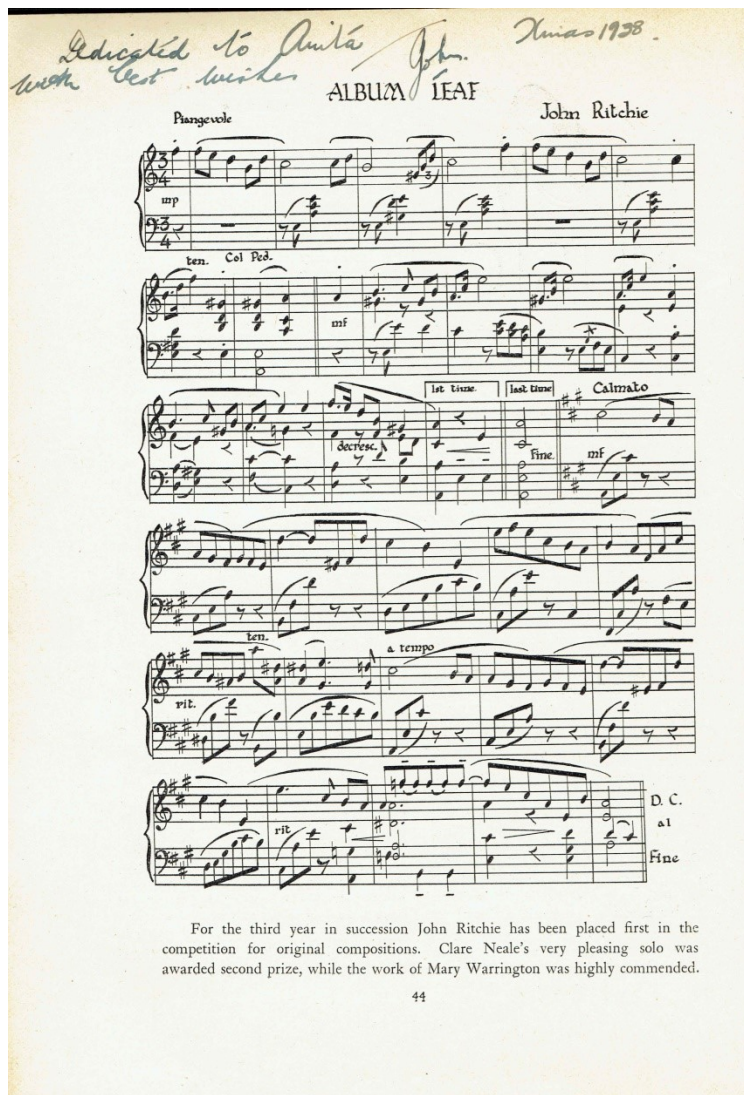


Figure 28: John Ritchie, *Album Leaf*. Published in the Dunedin Technical High School Magazine, 1939. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Chamber music also featured at the school and in the community and Ritchie took advantage of the many performance opportunities this provided. His playing, both as an individual and in groups, earned him various places in the annual Dunedin Competition Society's Festival. Griffiths's ensembles were made up of both present and past students as well as other musicians enrolled in Griffiths's instrumental evening or Saturday classes. A large number of entries for the festival were advanced during the Griffiths years; in 1937, for instance, seventy candidates from the school performed. In 1936, an ensemble comprising Ritchie, Leonard White and Robert Perks was placed first equal in the Instrumental Trios (group tuition) section. Anita too received a first placing with a mixed chamber

group in the Instrumental Quartet (group tuition) category. She was in fact the only girl from the college that year to receive a placing.

Excellence in Ritchie's performance continued throughout his senior years. In 1937 he was placed first in the Instrumental Trio (group tuition) along with Helen McCaw and Alan Cherry and the ensemble also received a Highly Commended in the Open class. Notably, Ritchie was awarded first prize with ninety-five points in the under eighteen Instrumental Solo (group tuition) and third with a mixed group in the Instrumental Quartet (group tuition) class. Commenting on the quality of the Instrumental Solo class's entries overall and on Ritchie's performance in particular, adjudicator Ernest Jenner noted:

Considering that this was a group tuition class, the results in some cases were astounding. The first and second competitors in particular expressed very good musicianship and interpretation, and showed a complete mastery of their instruments. The winner chose a very fine piece, and played it exceedingly well.⁵⁹

The following year Ritchie was awarded second in the Woodwind Solo class (open) behind first place getter Leonard White; third equal in the Instrumental Solo (group tuition), again behind Leonard White; first place in Instrumental Trio (group tuition) with Leonard White and Joan Delaney; and first also in Instrumental Quartet (group tuition) with Leonard White (arranger), Frank Callaway and D. Beatson. By the end of his secondary schooling, Ritchie was a highly skilled clarinettist and proficient on cello, tuba, E-flat (tenor) horn and double bass. He had conducted various voice and instrumental groups and performed in the orchestra, brass band and chamber groups for a variety of events including school concerts, exercise drill, invitation performances, and competitions.

⁵⁹ 'The Competitions: Annual Festival Continues', *Otago Daily Times*, 28 August 1937, p. 19, in *Papers Past* <<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/ODT19370828.2.146>> [accessed 18 July 2019].

Friendships in Music

Ritchie had now been friend, fellow-player, and classmate of many who would become well known and successful in their fields, both musical and non-musical, who had either attended King Edward Technical College or whom Ritchie had come into contact with in the wider Dunedin community. This included Robert Wade (1921-2008), a former New Zealand and British chess champion. Wade became a successful international chess player, coach, selector, event director and writer, and received an OBE in 1979 for services to British chess. Wade toured the world from his London based home where he died aged 87. Ritchie's collection of Christmas cards received in 1937 also demonstrates that some of his early connections became life-long, for example Anita, Frank Callaway and Douglas (Doug) Sloane. Whether the school produced a greater number of career successes than comparable institutions is not possible to say; however it is important to make mention of those who Ritchie came into contact with at the Technical College to provide context around Ritchie's school life, present a basis for probable influences, and to show his continued engagement with these individuals over time.

Frank Callaway (b. 1919-2014) who played chamber music with Ritchie was not a pupil of the school or in fact from Dunedin. Born in Timaru, he was taught violin by his parents from an early age which engendered a passion for music. Circumstances during the depression necessitated his leaving school at age fifteen to begin work; however travel to Dunedin both for his job and to study Commerce at Otago University saw him enrol in one of Griffiths's evening instrumental classes. Callaway abandoned his business degree; instead he enrolled at Teachers College and studied for a Bachelor of Music in the evenings. In 1942 he took over from Griffiths as Music Master at King Edward Technical College in what was just one stage of a long career and life in music.

Anita Proctor was born 16 June 1921, the eldest of four children to Annie Mansell and George Proctor. Annie was a pianist and both Annie and George were singers. Before Anita was born, the couple had spent a year in Australia performing with The Diggers concert party. Later, they sang with friends during lively music

evenings at the Proctor household in Dunedin. Anita took piano lessons as a child, firstly in a group at Begg's music shop during the Depression, then later with a private music teacher. Naturally gifted in singing, she sang in church and at school although she found early school music activities rather too rudimentary. She attended Andersons Bay Primary School, Dunedin, where she was named Dux runner-up at the end of her Standard Six year aged twelve. Against the recommendation of her teachers that she pursue academic study, her parents enrolled Anita in the Commercial Course at King Edward Technical College as they were keen for her to receive useful training that would lead to a good job. Ironically, it was Griffiths's method, implemented just the previous year, which provided the right environment for Anita to continue down a musical and academic path. She was given opportunities to perform as a soloist and play in chamber groups with other like-minded students.

Anita began secretarial work on leaving school in 1937; however despite her parents' wishes and intent for her future, she spent her spare time in the early mornings and evenings studying for her matriculation, the pre-requisite for teacher training. Griffiths, along with Ritchie encouraged and assisted her with her studies and in 1941 she achieved her aim of being accepted into Teachers Training College. She continued to be offered singing roles in Dunedin and was a soloist at the Patriotic Concert arranged by Vernon Griffiths in 1940 which was favourably reviewed. Soon after, she began singing lessons under the tutelage of Alfred Walmsley. These guiding two years were the only formal voice coaching Anita received, although she continued to perform, using the knowledge she had gained during her time with Walmsley together with her personal studies to further develop and train her voice.

Clare Peach (née Neale) (1921-2013) was the only child of music teacher Mary Vickers and Methodist Minister, Leslie Bourneman Neale. Peach was born at Stratford, Taranaki, where her father was stationed before being transferred to St Albans, Christchurch, in 1924. In 1931 the family moved south following Leslie Neale's appointment as Superintendent of the Methodist Mission in Dunedin. His dedication to humanity in relief work to help the poor, the unemployed, and the

elderly extended well beyond the call of duty throughout his service to the church. He was awarded an MBE in recognition for his Services to the Community in 1948. Like the Proctors, the Neales devoted time to performing in a musical group during World War One. Proceeds from recitals of Mr Pickford's Concert Party created a fund for soldiers serving overseas.

Mary Vickers was a gifted and highly skilled pianist who had gained her Fellowship of the School of Music (F.S.M) from Auckland University College in 1911.⁶⁰ At her own request Peach began piano lessons with her mother at age six sitting both Trinity and Royal College of Music examinations in piano and theory. Not always an easy teacher-pupil relationship: 'there were tears [...] but I got a squeeze and a hug from my mother when she was proud of me', Peach nonetheless became a very accomplished pianist and musician. Academically minded she spent her secondary school years at Otago Girls High School with the expectation of university studies to follow. In her final school year she learned that music, while not an option at Otago Girls High School, was offered at the technical school with Dr Griffiths. Some discussion took place between her parents and Girls High School staff and it was agreed – somewhat reluctantly on the part of the school's principal – that Peach could attend Griffiths's music classes in order to prepare for her matriculation examination. She was the only female amongst the group which included John Ritchie, Leonard White, Robert (Bobby) Perks, and others. Griffiths smoked non-stop and was an extremely passionate teacher. He listened and offered suggestions as the students played their exercises, pulling one book after another from well-stocked shelves to demonstrate various harmonic progressions.

At the end of 1937 after three years at high school Ritchie sat his matriculation examinations. Alas, he was let down by the chemistry teacher who had taught the wrong curriculum material for the year. He subsequently failed the exam and since a pass was required in all subjects, he was required to return to school in

⁶⁰ 'Auckland University College: School of Music, Examination Results', *Auckland Star*, 24 May 1911, p. 5, in *Papers Past* <<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/AS19110524.2.30>> [accessed 18 July 2019].

1938 for a re-sit. Although this put him back a year it proved beneficial in terms of his musical advancement. He continued his music studies with Griffiths and supplemented this with further reading and composing. He was involved with assisting and tutoring various vocal and instrumental groups at the school which enhanced his leadership and arranging skills. The year passed uneventfully while Ritchie applied himself to his studies and subsequent examinations at the end of the year. In January 1939, the matriculation results were published under the heading 'The Otago Passes'; Ritchie was awarded a 'P' for the university entrance examination pass while fellow music student Peach gained an 'M', the latter signifying a pass with Latin, a prerequisite for medical study. On 23 January, Ritchie received a telegraph of congratulations from Vernon Griffiths.

Ritchie returned to King Edward Technical College in 1939 for the sought after Higher Leaving Certificate. The Certificate gave students cover for university fees and enabled scholarship applications. Ritchie's musical efforts, too, were officially rewarded at the College. School records show payment was made to him throughout the year as a part-time employee. He was finally gaining some independence and could contribute to his keep. Although music was of primary concern, he also maintained an active involvement in sport during the year, travelling north to Christchurch with the school teams in June. Music classes and rehearsals were of particular intensity as preparations were underway for the King Edward Technical College's fiftieth Jubilee. The celebrations took place over a week from 7 to 12 August and Ritchie provided Griffiths with much needed assistance to manage the large numbers of choristers and instrumentalists; the massed choir of around seven hundred singers and the orchestra of just over one hundred players.

In September 1939 Ritchie submitted an application for entry to the Dunedin Training College. His submission was accompanied by two supporting letters: one from the Principal of the school, W.G. Aldridge, the other from Griffiths. Both referees wrote of Ritchie's excellent character and applauded his academic and musical ability. Aldridge noted that Ritchie was 'probably the best all-round boy so far produced under Dr. T.V. Griffiths: 'A player of half-a-dozen instruments,

an experienced teacher of group classes, and already possessing some skill in composing original music'.⁶¹ Griffiths expounded Ritchie's mastery of instruments citing his skill on the clarinet, most of the brass family, the cello and string bass, and knowledge of violin and piano, and was equally voluminous in his praise:

Receiving all his musical tuition at the School, he has made such excellent progress [...] taking various music-classes, supervising certain group-practices, attending to care of instruments, [...] undertaking with complete success duties which might tax the ability, zeal and enthusiasm of a fully-trained music specialist. [...]. In Harmony and Counterpoint he is probably already up to 2nd Year University standard. In the elements of Composition he shows distinct ability.⁶²

The War Years

Independence, Uncertainty and Commitment

Ritchie was one of seventeen males, along with fellow student and musician Leonard White, on the Division A list when the Training College Admissions were published.



Figure 29: John Ritchie, Leonard White, Harry Salter, and Bert Priest in front of Dunedin Training College. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

⁶¹ Ritchie papers, Personal Papers folder.

⁶² Ibid.

Adulthood and independence beckoned as he prepared to say goodbye to the period in his life which was later revealed as the most influential on his future career. Ritchie left secondary school with lasting memories of his time at King Edward Technical College. He had received an unexpected gift; an exceptional training in many aspects of music including harmony and counterpoint, arranging and composition, choral performance, proficiency and familiarity of various instruments, conducting and directing, and above all, confidence in his own ability, without which, he was unlikely to have succeeded. Griffiths saw in Ritchie a natural musical ability, but it was Ritchie's willingness to accept Griffiths's teaching, his keen participation in the various groups, and his work ethic which endeared him to Griffiths and ultimately set him on his life's path in music.

Ritchie would always remember Griffiths's immense energy and his tremendous ability to motivate and excite his students. Over his five years at the school, Ritchie observed and was part of the development and expansion of music in the classroom and beyond. The school boasted a massed choir of approximately four hundred voices, a special choir consisting of girls and boy trebles, a string orchestra, brass band, and a number of chamber groups. Ensembles benefited from the experience of recent past-music students who were also welcome to participate and perform. It was not only the sheer number of students involved in performing; the quality of the singing and playing was widely acknowledged by reviewers at the time.

Now with sufficient means to live an independent albeit frugal existence, Ritchie moved out of the Barnes's home to flat with three other students in a two-storey, two bedroomed flat in Union Street in time for the start of the 1940 university year. He was immersed in both teacher training and university degree study. This dual study path was not generally advised as the workload was considered too great; however Ritchie, like many others, was caught up in a sense of urgency following the outbreak of the Second World War. This course required a disciplined approach to study which fortunately Ritchie's flatmates were keen to emulate. The small abode was divided into four separate study areas for evening

revision: the two bedrooms, the kitchen-dining area, and by necessity, the toilet. A rotational roster was established to ensure parity.

Notwithstanding his studies, Ritchie remained involved in musical activities throughout the year. Together with Leonard White, he performed a clarinet duet at the Patriotic Concert presented by the Technical School and old pupils in August, at which Anita too sang. The *Star* called the concert a 'Musical Triumph', stating that 'Particularly noteworthy was the conducting of Frank Callaway'. The clarinet performance 'in which Mr Leonard White and Mr John Ritchie thoroughly deserved the acclamation they were given' was also singled out.⁶³ The programme also included soloists Robert Perks on piano and Alex Baxter on violin. A few weeks later a further performance by Ritchie and Leonard White for the Training College Choral Society's Concert was met with equal success: 'the anticipation of something really good was fulfilled again in masterly fashion'.⁶⁴

The teacher training college classes were, to Ritchie, rather mundane, principally because his interest in music and composing had strengthened over time while teaching general classes held little appeal. Of least interest to Ritchie was Nature Studies, a core curriculum subject at primary school level at the time. He tried in vain to comprehend its value without success much to the disapproval of the lecturer. Nonetheless the teacher training scholarship he had secured was a financial necessity and while he was not passionate about school teaching, he admired and appreciated Griffiths and others who fulfilled this role with zeal.

In 1940 Ritchie passed papers for his Bachelor of Music with good results: Acoustics (60), Counterpoint I (70), Harmony I (68), and Elementary Knowledge of Music (61). He achieved a First Class in Harmony and Counterpoint and Second Class for History and Appreciation of Music, and Acoustics.⁶⁵ He was

⁶³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1940-1948, *The Star*, newspaper cutting, [n.d.].

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ritchie papers, KETC folder, University of New Zealand notification card.

delighted to have also been awarded the Music Bursary.⁶⁶ Fellow student Peach achieved similar results in most of her studies with a first, second and third class pass for harmony, counterpoint and history respectively, but she struggled to understand the concepts in acoustics. Ritchie offered to help her the following year and her First Class pass, better than his the previous year, was a source of pleasure to her and annoyance to him.⁶⁷

Ritchie's 1942 results were of an equally high standard with good passes in Original Composition (80), Instrumentation (64), and Form in Composition (80). By this time, however, Ritchie and his fellow students sensed the imminent threat of conscription hanging over them. Ritchie was not surprised when he was called up on 15 November 1942 to do a fourteen week training period in the New Zealand Army. Fortunately he was still able to complete his examinations: Education (Pass – no marks allotted), Counterpoint II (75), and Harmony II (78). Additionally he applied for the deferment of his training scholarship and was pleased to receive the following reply: 'your letter of the 20th Ultimo has been considered by Council and authority has been given for the deferment of your bursary for one year'. It was to be over four years before Ritchie returned to civilian life.

Ritchie was not at all sorry that his teacher training was put on hold but was determined to continue with his music degree. He had found himself to be much more advanced in his university music studies than the other students in every area including composing. During 1943, his fourth year of university study, Ritchie was required to complete a number of musical exercises, essentially three reasonably substantial works. This was certainly not easy to accomplish since he was in effect a full time serviceman; however an army minister granted him the use of a room and a piano and he used most of his spare time working on the compositions. In retrospect, Ritchie considered them ill-written and not of a very

⁶⁶ 'University of Otago Terms Examinations Results Announced', *Otago Daily Times*, 5 October 1940 in *Papers Past* <<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/ODT19401005.2.33>> [accessed 18 July].

⁶⁷ Ritchie and Peach both recalled this in their respective interviews.

high standard: ‘It’s extraordinary how poor they were [...]. I certainly wouldn’t pass them for a MusB nowadays’. Nonetheless, they were obviously at the appropriate level for the time; towards the end of the year he received notification that he had passed the Musical Exercise in the October-November examinations of 1943. He was subsequently awarded a Bachelor of Music from the University of New Zealand in May 1944, one year after Clare Peach.

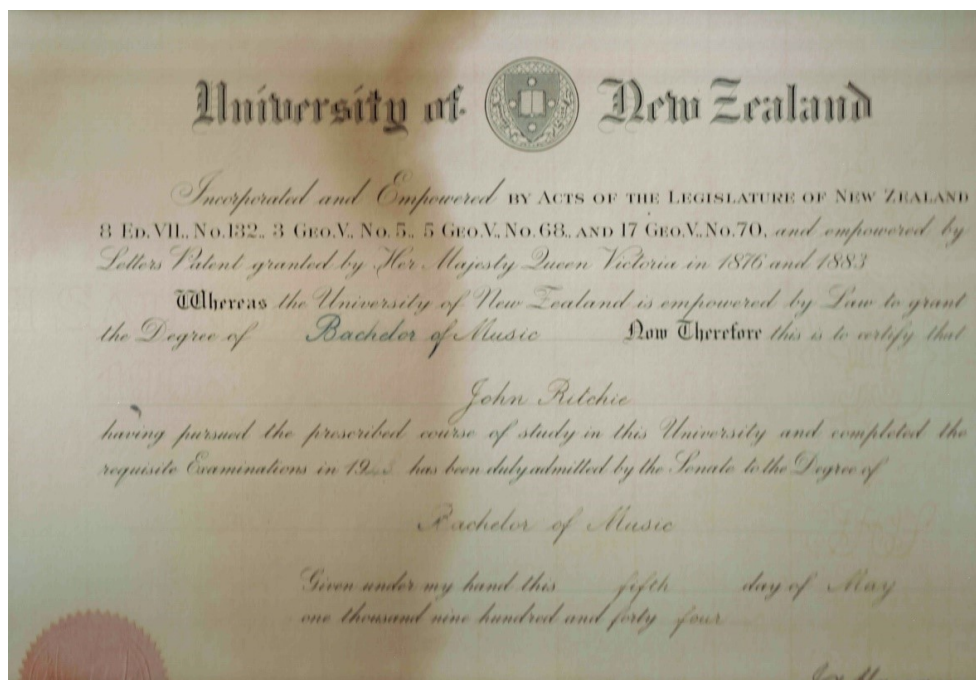


Figure 30: John Ritchie, Bachelor of Music certificate from the University of New Zealand. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

During his study years, Ritchie had sporadic contact with family members. In 1940 he received birthday wishes from his mother: ‘A very happy birthday my dearest from Mom’ and from an aunt: ‘To Dear Ant From Grandma and Nell’. Although Ritchie’s relationship with Anita’s mother was often fraught with tension, Anita’s parents also delivered greetings: ‘Many Happy returns of the 29th’. The couple’s courtship continued throughout Ritchie’s study years but was mostly by letter once Ritchie entered the armed services. It was almost impossible to travel even when leave was granted and Ritchie used any spare time to concentrate on his composing exercises. At that stage a commitment of exclusivity in their friendship had not been established, but when Anita was

invited to Nelson to visit another young man and his family, Ritchie gave her an ultimatum bluntly telling her: 'If you do that, that's the end of us!'.⁶⁸ This signalled a turning point in their relationship. Anita faced what she knew would be the inevitable disapproval from her mother since the suitor in question, a medical student, was well liked by Annie. Apparently when Annie compared the young men's respective families – one the son of a medical superintendent and the other a kind of orphan with no family to speak of – she found Ritchie sadly wanting. Anita, however, would not be swayed from her conviction that Ritchie was the one for her and in 1943 they became engaged. Annie's alarm at this turn of events was only subdued when she realised that an impending marriage was unlikely due to Ritchie's military duties, and that anything might happen in the meantime.

Ritchie enjoyed his first army assignment in artillery training. After a few months he was one of several selected for higher duty instruction and was assigned to spend time at the Officers Training School in Plimmerton, near Wellington. He was commissioned on his twenty-first birthday, on September 1942. Life settled into some sort of routine for him just as it did for the large number of soldiers kept in reserve for the expected Japanese invasion of New Zealand. Nonetheless, attention remained focused on sending New Zealand troops to Britain. Selected officers including Ritchie, were given the opportunity to volunteer for the Royal New Zealand Air Force, an offer which Ritchie was immediately attracted to. He was soon transferred out of the Army and travelled north to Taieri to commence his training at the Elementary Flying Training School (E.F.T.S.).

Ritchie's first practical training session took place on Tuesday 23rd November 1943 with Flying Officer Bowles in a De Havilland (D.H.) 82 Tiger Moth. This consisted of a twenty-minute briefing followed by a thirty-five minute session later in the same day which covered familiarity of the cockpit, preparations for flight, air experience, cockpit drill, effect of controls, and taxiing. The next day

⁶⁸ Jenny Lee, *Anita Ritchie: Personal Recollections* (Jenny Lee: Christchurch, 2001), p. 15.

Ritchie was in the air for the first time as a trainee pilot and ten days later on 26 November, having achieved satisfactory progress, he undertook his first solo flight. Prior to this ten-minute milestone, he had received a total training time of eleven hours and fifteen minutes. Specific skills were taught and practised: gliding and climbing turns, aerobatics, side slipping, spinning, recovery from spins, and going round again. A summary in his log book on 4 January 1945 at the end of the first stage of his Air Force training was itemised thus: Dual 42.00: Solo 21.55. An assessment of the trainees was also made at this juncture and pilots were determined to be one of Exceptional, Above Average, Average or Below Average. Second Lieutenant John Ritchie was graded by Officer Commanding K. B. Robinson thus: Proficiency as pilot on type D.H. 82 – average; Ability as pilot-navigator – average. By the end of 1943 Ritchie had amassed the sum total of sixty-two and a half flying hours, around half of which were solo.

Having displayed the necessary skill level, Ritchie was assigned to begin more advanced training at a Service Flying Training School (S.F.T.S). In mid-January 1944 he and his fellow trainees travelled to Wigram Air Base in Christchurch to commence a period of further instruction, this time in the twin-engine Oxford Airspeed AS 10. The Oxford was used as a training aircraft for bomber pilots as well as for training in navigation, radio-operation and gunnery. The course ran from 19 January to 7 March and covered a myriad of skills: instrument flying, straight and level, turns onto courses, precautionary landings, single engine forced landing, climbing and reducing height, instrument take offs, night flying cross-country Wigram-Rakaia-Kaiapoi-Wigram, single engine-flying, steep turns, overshoot procedure, stalling, and flapless landings.⁶⁹

At the completion of this training Ritchie had accumulated 37.20 hours dual flying and 31.20 hours as First Pilot on the Oxford with a proficiency rating of average for pilot on the twin-engined craft and above average for pilot-navigator skills. On 20 March, Ritchie was certified as qualified to wear the Flying Badge but completed two additional classes of training: Advanced Training School

⁶⁹ Ritchie papers, John Ritchie Log Book.

(A.T.S.) from 21 March to 3 May in order to qualify as a service pilot on Oxford Aircraft, and Beam Approach Training (B.A.T.) from 5 to 10 May 1944.

During his time in the services, Ritchie maintained correspondence with Anita and occasionally met with her in Dunedin when on leave. The couple were, like many others, faced with an uncertain future. Ritchie was awaiting news of his placement and they discussed their options. They could remain betrothed in the hope that Ritchie would return safely and they would both be of the same mind, or they could commit themselves fully to each other in marriage prior to his departure, providing certainty to their relationship whatever the outcome.

Much to the dismay and protestations of Anita's mother at the announcement, they chose to marry and preparations for the event were soon underway. On Saturday afternoon on 12 February 1944, John Ritchie and Anita Proctor took their vows in St Paul's Cathedral in Dunedin in a service conducted by Archdeacon Cruickshank. Annie, who had eventually resigned herself to her daughter's fate, and husband George attended along with a few friends. Ritchie's chosen best man fellow Flying Officer Walter (Wally) Phear and groomsman Ray Lute had their leave cancelled unexpectedly and were unable to attend.⁷⁰ Other arrangements were hurriedly made and Frank Callaway and Lawrence Brittain stood in as replacements.⁷¹ Anita was accompanied by her two sisters Veronica and Iris as bridesmaids.

⁷⁰ 'Walter Victor Ashleigh Phear', *Auckland Museum: War Memorial Online Cenotaph* <<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/94846>> [accessed 14 July 2019].
The Cambridge Air Force, 'Roll Call', *The No. 30 (Avenger) Squadron and Servicing Unit* <<http://www.cambridgeairforce.org.nz/30%20Squadron%20Roll%20Call.htm#30Sq>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

⁷¹ 'Laurence Henry Brittain', *Auckland Museum: War Memorial Online Cenotaph* <<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C142866>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

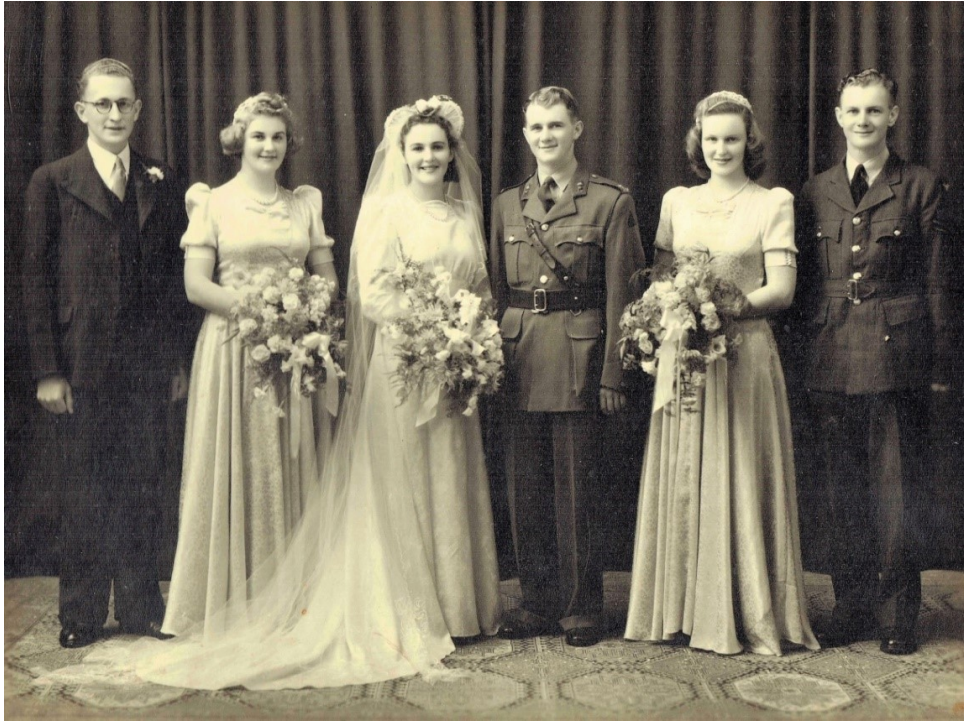


Figure 31: John Ritchie and Anita Proctor on their wedding day. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

After a small reception and photographs, they drove out to the Otago Peninsula in a borrowed car and spent their wedding night together in lodgings where, Ritchie believed, their first-born, Judith, was conceived. Once again, they were in defiance of Annie who, on seeing her daughter's determination and resolve to marry the man 'who would only bring nothing but trouble', accepted this turn of events on the understanding that there would be no children until after the war. With his leave over, Ritchie left Anita in Dunedin the following day and returned to Wigram Air base, knowing that it would not be long before he would be given details of his deployment. Still, they were determined to make the most of any time they spent together and even managed a real honeymoon some weeks later in Akaroa thanks to Vernon and Daphne Griffiths.

Daphne Griffiths (née Spear) (1916-2009) first remembers Griffiths when he visited the Spear's home in Christchurch in 1930 to ask her parents' permission to take Daphne's younger brother, Roy (1918-1996), to one of his summer camps at Akaroa. Roy played trumpet and Daphne believed he was one of the first to attend Griffiths's Saturday morning music classes. Griffiths suggested that Roy take his

instrument and cricket bat for the trip. Daphne recalled that Griffiths was a very important person to many in the city both at that time, then later when he returned to lecture at Canterbury University and she ‘got a bit tired of hearing “Mr Griffiths says we can do this” and “Mr Griffiths says we can do that”’.⁷² Yet, her feelings obviously changed at some point, since several years later when Daphne was near the end of her nursing training in Christchurch, the two became romantically involved. They were married rather privately on 10 May 1944, three months after the Ritchies’ nuptials. Griffiths was thought of as a very good catch but by this time was also perceived as a confirmed bachelor. Possibly because of this view, and because of a somewhat large age difference (over twenty years) between the couple, Griffiths arranged the wedding quietly and only placed a notice in the paper the following day. Daphne believed that Griffiths had concerns that ‘nosey-parker students’ might turn up. It was a small event of ‘ten people [...] counting the photographer’.⁷³ Anita attended but Ritchie was absent as he was being awarded his Wings at Wigram Air Base.



Figure 32: John Ritchie, front right, getting his wings ceremony. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

⁷² Daphne Griffiths, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 24 June 2008). Recording and transcription held by the author.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

Nonetheless, the two couples travelled together to Akaroa later that day, the Ritchies to the Bruce Hotel and the Griffiths the Madeira Hotel for their respective honeymoons. By this time, unbeknown to all, Anita was pregnant with her first child.



Figure 33: John and Anita Ritchie. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

As stated, by May 1944 Ritchie had earned his wings along with several others including close friend Geoff Brown. Not long after the holiday in Akaroa the two men were given orders to prepare to leave and on 16 June they boarded the *S.S. Themistocles* headed for Melbourne. War hung over them but it was still some distance away and the men relaxed into the journey, chatting, smoking and playing cards. Disembarking six days later in Melbourne, Ritchie spent much of his time with his friends and fellow pilots Geoff Brown and Geoff 'Dunc' Duncan sightseeing, meeting up with contacts provided by family and friends, and visiting some night spots. Ritchie also managed to fit in a few rounds of golf and played billiards at the Officers' Club. He also attended a church service, and managed to fit in a visit to the Conservatorium of Music where he was struck by the large number of students, purported to be around two hundred and fifty, and the thirty-two pianos at their disposal.

The ship sailed from Melbourne on 5 July 1944, stopping for two days in Perth before continuing the journey to England via South Africa. Initially, Ritchie

struggled with boredom and bemoaned how slow time seemed to pass but he eventually settled into a daily routine. This consisted variously of deck golf, bridge, physical activities including quoits and boxing, with meals, smoking, corresponding, and chatting in between. It was not until 2 August before land was sighted again as the Coast of Africa came into view. After spending the first night on board at the port in Durban, the men were directed to Clairwood Camp, a remote desert-like place where Ritchie's party was reprimanded by the Wing Commander for not saluting. The filthy bedclothes and the meagre dinner portions were the last straw for Ritchie and Brown, and they slipped out of camp and took a taxi to the centre of town where they booked into the Royal Hotel. The signs of separatism were highly visible, from the 'Europeans Only' banners attached to city amenities, bars and seating, to the coloured homeless people sleeping on the footpaths as the taxi sped through the slums.

The next part of the ship's journey took them round the Cape of Good Hope and ashore on 19 August to another camp, Retreat where the facilities were much improved. The mess hosted three billiard tables, plenty of seating, fair food and, most importantly to Ritchie and Brown, a good bar. The only drawback was the less than friendly company of the Royal Air Force men who looked down on the New Zealanders and riled them at every possible chance. Once again with little to do, Ritchie and his friends availed themselves of the opportunity to socialise and attended a variety of evening events including a Cape Town Municipal Orchestra concert. The programme of Elgar and Kalinnikov was enjoyable and the 'performance good, considering the shortage of manpower'.⁷⁴ Afternoon tea at the Waldorf, a trip to the zoo, golf at the Royal Cape Golf club, communion on Sunday, and a visit to the university were just some of the jaunts Ritchie enjoyed. He was particularly interested in the university's music faculty which offered a Bachelor of Music (MusB) and a Diploma, similar in content to the New Zealand universities but without counterpoint. Life was a far cry from the fighting in Europe but they were all aware of the impending reality of war which hung over them.

⁷⁴ Ritchie papers, John Ritchie Wartime Diary.

On their return to port a week later they boarded a different ship, a larger and more imposing vessel with three thousand Italian Prisoners of War already ensconced on the lower deck. The antipodeans were charged with keeping guard over these men in their quarters. The area was extremely cramped and an overpowering odour permeated throughout. Nonetheless, between their duties on watch, there was ample time for some bridge, reading, and letter writing. Much to Ritchie's dismay, alcohol was not permitted although the squadron leaders appeared to be exempt from this prohibition as they regularly appeared to be well-oiled. Time passed slowly; the air was heavy and the berth, originally designed for two, hosted twelve, a situation which Ritchie found difficult to tolerate.

The days ran into one another and, apart from a single incident, passed uneventfully. The men had become used to standing guard, listening to the chattering and 'lingo' of their charges. There did not seem to be any ill-feeling between the prisoners and soldiers; rather a mutual understanding for their respective roles. Considering their plight, the prisoners were well-behaved and appeared to have resigned themselves to their situation, probably thankful to be alive. This particular watch for Ritchie began the same as any other but as he stood idly chatting to his neighbouring duty officer, one of their Italian charges suddenly found his circumstances unbearable. In a moment, he accosted a guard some distance away from where Ritchie was standing and succeeded in wrestling his pistol from him. In the tussle that ensued, the gun went off. The bullet whistled over the top of Ritchie's head and hit a clock directly on the wall above. The bullet remained lodged where it struck while the clock shattered and fell in pieces around where Ritchie stood. The man was quickly subdued but this episode, so removed from the way the trip had passed to date, remained etched on Ritchie's mind. The speed of the attack meant that there was little that could have been done to avoid potential injury or death in terms of where Ritchie was situated, but it was certainly one instance when he was thankful for his small stature.

They spent their last night aboard the ship on 13 September, thirteen weeks after leaving New Zealand shores. Ritchie felt quite sorry to be leaving the vessel as he farewelled the New Zealanders he had befriended during the voyage. He

disembarked and stood on British soil for the first time in Gourock, Scotland. It was cold and wet and the overcast day offered an unwelcome atmosphere as the group waited an hour at the station before finally being given permission to board the train. The appearance of the dreary, grey stone houses, and rows of tenement buildings flashing past did little to lift his spirits. It contrasted sharply with the splendid impression which Ritchie had borne when imagining his father's country and home. They stopped on the outskirts of Glasgow where they experienced their first real black out and were asked for money and cigarettes by the throngs of young people milling about near the station. After sleeping through the night as the train continued on its way south, they arrived in London the next morning to a much livelier outlook. A jovial crowd waved at them cheerily as they alighted. They made their way to the waiting car which transported them to the Service Hotel for breakfast before heading to Victoria Station and on the train to Brighton.

There was no time to sightsee or deviate from their prescribed journey; however in the brief time between train trips it was noticeable that London had suffered the effects of war and showed its battle scars in the debris left by the bombs which regularly fell – a sight which Ritchie would never forget. He spent the journey to Brighton sorting and reading the forty or so letters from Anita which had been amongst the mail collected from Newcastle-on-Tyne where they had stopped for refreshments the previous night. Anita's news was of the people back home in New Zealand, her musings on her pregnancy, and their baby due in March. Ritchie suddenly felt a very long way away from her, the three months apart interminable and the thought that it could be many more before he saw her again did not help his now low spirits. His thoughts dwelt on Anita bearing the birth and additional responsibility alone, and being of strong religious conviction he comforted himself with a prayer that God would look kindly on them. Years later Anita disclosed that she believed that although both Ritchie and she had discussed spirituality and religion at length, she always felt Ritchie to be more devout than her. Certainly, his beliefs and religious rituals were a strong theme which ran throughout his life.

England, a Reunion and the Distractions of War

Anita's letters conveyed news of those who would not be returning to their families in New Zealand including friend Charles Stephen (Steve) Reeves who had been killed in action in Italy, leaving behind a wife and two children.⁷⁵ This brought home to Ritchie the danger he and his friends might be exposed to and heightened his own sense of mortality, but his allegiance and belief in the allied cause did not waiver. He arrived in Brighton with Geoff Brown where they completed the necessary paper work before they made their way to their assigned quarters and unpacked. Wartime Brighton may not have had its usual number of peacetime visitors, who strolled up and down the piers and streets, but it managed to retain much of its holiday atmosphere nonetheless and the men's spirits lifted.

The following few days were spent relatively quietly with only a few activities on offer; an outing to a dance at the Royal Pavilion on the evening of 16 September which ended early with the blackout, participation in the church parade on Battle of Britain Day, and a brief attendance at an evening social. There was more form filling, an exploration of the town, and a failed attempt to get to London. A birthday parcel arrived for Ritchie on 22 September and was opened with much anticipation. The enclosed chocolate and chewing gum provided a welcome taste bud delight. Ritchie and Brown were finally granted leave for the following week under the Lady Frances Ryder Scheme.⁷⁶ Since neither man was on duty over the weekend they decided on a second attempt at travel to London. They successfully made their way to Victoria Station and a reunion with Ritchie's mother, Jessie.

Ritchie had experienced little meaningful contact with his mother from the time she left the family unit and ultimately New Zealand shores. The tenuous bond

⁷⁵ 'Charles Stephen Reeves', *Auckland Museum: War Memorial Online Cenotaph* <<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C31156>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

⁷⁶ The official name was 'Dominion Services and Students Hospitality Scheme' of which Lady Frances Ryder was the Organiser. Dominion servicemen were provided with lodgings in private homes in Britain during leave. National Portrait Gallery, *Lady Frances Ryder* <<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw71310/Lady-Frances-Ryder>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

from his childhood had been weakened by his early separation from home to boarding school. During his years in Dunedin following his father's death, parcels arrived for Ritchie periodically from Jessie in England on special occasions such as birthdays and at Christmas time. Ritchie always sent a polite letter of thanks, but although Jessie wrote back to him, such letters did not hold any particular significance to him. It was apparent that his mother wished to maintain contact, albeit from afar, but this very likely meant more to her than it did to Ritchie at the time. As a distant party, Jessie was unable to participate in any meaningful way in her son's life during his formative years as he progressed with the musical, educative, and emotional influences at King Edward Technical College. Ritchie's recollection of her receded as his life was filled with new experiences and connections, while her memories of him were of a time long past. Ritchie did not recall Jessie being mentioned by his aunt or uncle and assumed there was little contact between them. Notwithstanding, Ritchie took his mother's contact details with him to Britain, notifying her of his arrival and his wish to reconnect with her.

Ritchie and Brown were met at Victoria Station by Ritchie's mother whom he recognized only because of a family resemblance to his uncle Arthur. Ritchie had stayed with Arthur Harrison over the Christmas period of 1934 and photographs of him were also displayed at Elsie Barnes's home. Such was Jessie's fall from grace in the eyes of her family that Ritchie had never seen an image of her; Jessie's likeness to her youngest brother, nonetheless, was unmistakable. Jessie on the other hand appeared uncertain as to who to approach when faced with the two men walking towards her: 'John and I are very much the same build. Didn't look the same, but similar [...] and this little woman sort of looked at both of us and she wasn't absolutely sure which was her son'.⁷⁷ The initial meeting was somewhat awkward but good manners from both parties prevailed and after introductions had been completed, the three made their way via taxi to lodgings in Orme Court, Bayswater, which Jessie had secured for them. Ritchie and Brown settled into the flat before meeting Jessie in the lounge of Odinino's. The presence of a third person in Brown facilitated an amicable and light tone, and the

⁷⁷ Geoff Brown, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Auckland: 16 June 2009). Recording and transcript held by the author.

conversation flowed relatively easily, kept going by the young men who talked of their journey to England, their current activities, and Ritchie's recent nuptials.

The following morning Ritchie and Brown attended an Ordination service at St Paul's Cathedral. They were struck by the huge size of the structure and although the building, unlike others, was not devastated by the bombs which fell regularly in London, its beauty was somewhat obscured by the not insignificant damage, subsequent fires, and the wartime defence measures now in place surrounding it. The remainder of their leave was spent relaxing and socialising. They enjoyed lunch and beer at the New Zealand Forces Club and played bridge or billiards, while the evenings were spent dining and dancing at the Overseas League. On the final day of their leave, Ritchie took a tour of St Martin's in the Field church before spending afternoon tea at Charing Cross Hotel with Jessie. As he made his way towards Victoria Station after leaving Jessie, Ritchie experienced his first air-raid and spied a flying bomb streaking across the sky in eerie silence while the sirens rang out. The bomb was flying too high to be of immediate danger but its presence unnerved him all the same. He continued on his way and along with Brown and a few other antipodean servicemen, boarded the train headed for Brighton.

At the outset Ritchie accepted the accommodation arrangement which Jessie offered the two men for their leave in London, but he quite soon became aware that his mother was not in any way wealthy. Fearing this was likely putting her under some financial strain, he suggested they could book a hotel for their short stays in the future, an offer which Jessie readily accepted. Ritchie was soon back in London on leave where he enjoyed more time with his mother and, perhaps more significantly, made plans to visit Trinity College London. Vernon Griffiths had suggested that Ritchie could continue his studies at the college when leave allowed, in much the same way as he had done in order to complete his music exercises for his Bachelor of Music. Griffiths was only too aware of the disruption to Ritchie's studies which war duties had caused, and was keen to offer ways to minimise any adverse effects. Armed with Griffiths's letter of introduction, Ritchie arrived at the college and was given a tour of the college by the curator,

Mr Batton, before being introduced to the Principal, Dr Ault. Ault welcomed Ritchie enthusiastically and asked after both Griffiths and Professor Galway who were obviously well known to him. Ault agreed to supervise Ritchie's work in preparation for his Licentiate in Music Trinity College London (LMusTCL) Diploma in Conducting examination the following January.

The remainder of Ritchie's leave passed uneventfully albeit enjoyably enough at the town of Shipley in West Yorkshire with hosts Major Parkinson and family. He visited nearby Bradford, known to him as an industrial centre and the birthplace of Delius. He was nonetheless disappointed by its lack of greenery, the denseness of the aged stone buildings and cobbled streets, all of which added to its oppressive atmosphere. He spent his time quietly with the Parkinson family and their friends, attended to correspondence and found time for a little Christmas shopping which included the book *Love for a Country* by Rom Landau for Anita. During this early part of his time away from New Zealand Ritchie continued to miss Anita acutely. Time spent with others, however convivial the company, brought up the pain of their separation and aroused feelings of loss of shared experiences. The couple had spent little time together as husband and wife prior to Ritchie's departure and, as it transpired, the longer they spent living separate lives apart, the more difficult it became to reconnect later. While Anita's physical surroundings had not changed, Ritchie was unable to observe the changes in her during her pregnancy, or share in the baby's eventual arrival. Anita on the other hand could only imagine Ritchie's life thousands of miles away in places she had never seen based solely on Ritchie's letters. Anita spent her time preparing for the baby and Ritchie's eventual return while Ritchie increasingly found his time taken up with his duties, new experiences and connections, and social and sporting distractions. Under such circumstances it was to be expected that their relationship would face some challenges once the war was over. While their situation was far from unique there was no doubt that their relationship suffered from this enforced time apart.

On 6 October Ritchie and Brown left Brighton for Birmingham to undergo further pilot training at No.14 E.F.T.S. Once again they were left kicking their heels, in

part due to some disorganisation at the aerodrome, but mainly because permission for any aerial activity was not forthcoming due to the weather conditions.



Figure 34: Ritchie and Geoff Brown in the United Kingdom between 1945 and 1946. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

As well as flying, the training syllabus allowed for a lecture every second day which everyone was expected to attend. The New Zealand contingency however, including Ritchie, was not of a mind to be subjected to such sedentary instruction, and remained in their hut while these were taking place. They played bridge and went for a stroll in the evenings to pass the time but were confined to camp during the day and time dragged. Some excitement was created when an officious staff flight sergeant doing his rounds discovered their absence from class and angrily took note of all their names with the threat of dire consequences for their truancy – although these never came to pass. It was a further three days before Ritchie took to the air but the training, in a D.H. 82, was simply a refresher for the pilots from the commonwealth countries because it had been several months since they had flown. It was bracingly cold and the visibility poor but Ritchie managed three flips for the day. This period of action was short-lived however as on 10 October Ritchie sustained an injury to his shoulder while playing a game of rugby and was left to recuperate with his arm in a sling. He was immediately relieved of duty and within a few days was granted permission to leave camp.

Ritchie had a number of contacts given to him by friends back home and was keen to get in touch with as many of these as possible. His mentor's family was high on his list and in good spirits he made his way to Yardley Wood Road and spent a very pleasant afternoon with Vernon Griffiths's sister, Mrs Hal Turnbull and her eleven year old daughter, Janette. It had been nearly twenty years since Griffiths had left England and Mrs Turnbull was delighted to hear Ritchie's account of her brother's recent marriage to Daphne Spears. He was able to relay similar stories to Griffiths's brother and his family when he lunched with them a few days later. They too were very welcoming and pleased to meet with a New Zealander who knew Vernon so well, and who had benefited from his benevolence and musical expertise.

By 23 October Ritchie was fully recovered and once more took to the air, this time in a Tiger Moth in the D flight unit under the instruction of various flight sergeants. During the next two weeks he successfully completed a solo and passenger test adding 8.45 and 12.35 to his dual and solo flying hours respectively. The weather put paid to any substantial increase of flying time whilst a considerable amount of time in the air was spent searching for the aerodrome through dense fog. Still, the group of nine men including Ritchie and Brown enjoyed a close camaraderie and were determined to make their stay as enjoyable as possible. This included brightening their rather bare and unattractive quarters by way of the acquisition and installation of mirrors, beer advertisements, and some tables and chairs. The nearby Wheatsheaf became their hotel of choice and was frequented on a regular basis providing both relief from the confines of camp and general amusement in the form of drinking, conversation and dancing. They wore full battledress attire on such occasions finding that it was very much to their advantage particularly when it came to partnering with the local lasses for the twice weekly dances.

A few similarly occupied weeks passed before Ritchie and Brown were posted back to Brighton to attend formal theoretical classes. There was some grief at the break-up of the now established group and the departure from their comfortable and familiar surroundings. Their digs in Brighton at Warwick Mansions however

were very congenial comprising a room with a gas heater and hot and cold running water with wash basin. The only downside to their quarters was the four flights of stairs they had to climb to arrive at the dwelling which they were obliged to do at least three times a day. They soon spied friendly faces again, in particular a number of Canadian pilots. By the end of the first week's lessons on 10 January it was apparent that the material was once again a replication of their New Zealand class training, taught in a condescending and bored manner by British instructors who appeared uninterested in both topics and students alike. Ritchie and Brown were soon 'fed up to the back teeth with them'.⁷⁸ Perhaps the most memorable occurrence was a practical class on life-boat drill conducted at the local baths. The men, attired in wet canvas suits and Mae West life jackets, leapt from the high board into the cool water below, quickly turned over, and attempted to get into both large and small rubber dinghies.

While Brown was posted back to Birmingham, Ritchie was directed to a short spell in Wolverhampton before returning once more to Brighton, managing to accumulate a small number of additional flying hours in the process. It was around this time that he, along with the rest of the New Zealand contingency, was promoted to the rank of Flying Officer. This was a consequence of having completed six months training and importantly, it gave their pay packets a boost. The anticipated Christmas leave was both applied for and granted, and Ritchie once more headed to Birmingham to spend time with the Griffiths families. By 3 January 1945, he and fellow New Zealanders Geoff Brown and Viv Maisiey had returned once more to Brighton. From there they left for Aldergrove in Northern Ireland to fulfil Flying Control Duties. Having bemoaned their lack of flying time and the continual bouts of repeat training thus far, they had also been persuaded by some fellow servicemen to apply for a transfer to the Fleet Air Arm where, they were informed, there was a much greater likelihood of being engaged in flying. After only a week in Aldergrove, they were suddenly recalled back to Brighton where they were advised that their transfer to the Navy had been ratified.

⁷⁸ John Ritchie, *Interview with John Ritchie*, (Christchurch, 2007). Recording and transcript held by the author.

They packed hurriedly and prepared for travel to HMS Macaw at Bootle in Cumberland.

The trip to Bootle was relatively uneventful for the fifty or so men who made the journey and they were well received on arrival at camp.



Figure 35: Ritchie, front row third from right, with fellow trainees. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The general atmosphere was congenial, the instructors were well-versed in their respective topics, and there was sufficient new material such as naval terminology and ship procedure to maintain the men's interest. Living quarters were comfortable and there was the usual entertainment to be had off-duty in nearby bars and dance halls. Arrangements were made for the acquisition of new uniforms and by mid-February they had completed their course on the Macaw and were enjoying some leave in London. Brown and Maisey then left for Penrith to stay with hosts Major and Mrs Huggins at their stately home, Cross Rig Hall, under the Lady Ryder scheme, while Ritchie remained in London for some study and to sit his final examinations at Trinity College.

Intensive Flying Training

By mid-February Ritchie, Brown and Maisey had collected their belongings from HMS Macaw and made their way to Errol in Scotland for their Advanced Flying Training. Generally they found the journeys to and from the various camps

tedious because of the number of transport changes along the way which necessitated a transfer of their rather burdensome loads at each stop. This time, however, a through carriage had been arranged, and the changes at Whitehaven, Carlisle, Carstairs and Perth involved only shifting themselves while the carriage containing their luggage was uncoupled and reattached to the rear of the new train. The camp facilities at Errol were rather basic; their sleeping quarters comprised a Nissen hut heated by a stove. The compulsory lectures on topics such as navigation, armament, ship and aircraft recognition, and ramjet (RJ) engines however kept their interest as all of the material was new. Flying began a week after their arrival and so, as habit dictated, there was still time to scour the neighbourhood and find the usual mix of entertainment such as dancing, drinking, and team sports.

Flying drill started in earnest in late February on Harvard aircraft with exercises in steep turns, stalls, spins, and forced and precautionary landings. As anticipated, the training was focussed and intense, and Ritchie and the other trainee pilots flew consistently.

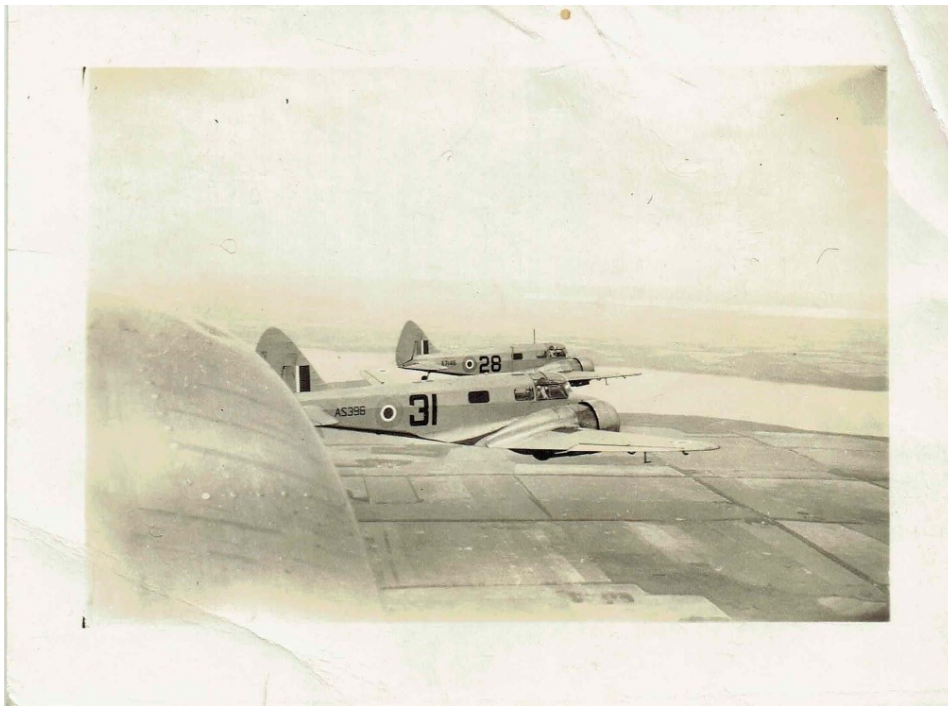


Figure 36: Ritchie flying an Avro Anson training plane. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The trainees each spent an average of five hours with an instructor before they were permitted to fly solo. By this time they had received adequate training in all aspects of flying the plane, including aerobatics. With their rather cavalier and somewhat rebellious attitude, they used their new found knowledge of R.T. communication to keep in touch while they flew outside the prescribed training area to survey the picturesque countryside. They particularly enjoyed locating the well-known St Andrews Golf Course, and infuriated the local players by flying down low across the green to beat up the fairway.

New Zealand life as Ritchie had left it a year ago seemed remote, however letters from family and friends arrived periodically to inform of events at home. News was shared between the friends and there was much anticipation amongst Ritchie's group for the arrival of his firstborn. In the middle of March the eagerly awaited telegram arrived for Ritchie who, together with Viv Maisey, was out socialising in Dundee at the time of the cable's delivery. Brown, who had left town earlier and returned to camp, was the first to spy the cablegram and phoned the Royal where he had last seen his friends. Ethel, the barmaid was then obliged to walk the short distance to Wilsons Dining Café to relay the news; Judith Ann had arrived on 11 March, mother and baby both well. This was obviously an occasion for a celebratory drink or two and by the time Ritchie and Maisey returned to camp, they were rather inebriated but nonetheless were obliged to down a further couple of jugs of beer which their fellow servicemen had lined up for them in preparation of their return to base.

Following the completion of a course with the No. 9 (Pilots) Advanced Flying Unit (AFU) in Errol, Perthshire the men were given instructions to head for Hinstock in Shropshire for a week long Instrument Flying course on Oxfords and some additional training on Tiger Moths. Both men found the experience taxing with Brown describing the instrument training as 'a hell of an experience [...] staring at dials for long periods with a gadget like an iron mask strapped to the old cranium'.⁷⁹ The extreme cold and cramped cockpit conditions, especially for the

⁷⁹ Ritchie papers, copy of Geoff Brown's Wartime Diary No. 1.

much taller Brown, tested their endurance as they undertook spin recovery exercises in the Tiger Moth.



Figure 37: Ritchie front left. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

They were certainly pleased when that part of the training was completed. Leisure time was spent largely in the mess, partaking of the ubiquitous ale and enjoying a raucous singsong. This usually ended with fellow serviceman ‘Bush’ Cushen sounding out *The Last Post* on ‘Olly’ Oliver’s trumpet. Both Brown and Ritchie recalled that on one occasion the commotion, exacerbated by the engine noise of two motorcycles which the men enjoyed racing around the camp on, became too much for the Staff Lieutenant who arrived in the early hours of the morning to silence them with a talking to. His harried demeanour and stern dressing down only added to their jollity and it was some time before quiet was restored.

The next scheduled stop for the men was the Greenwich Naval College; however on the eve of the move, three volunteers were needed to return to HMS Mccaw to begin *Seafire* training. Several men put their names forward and of those both Ritchie and Brown were selected as well as Bush. They were given three days

leave before they reported for duty but at the last moment Bush was excluded leaving the two friends to join the remainder of their draft of ten in Bootle for the journey to Henstridge in Somerset. They arrived at No. 2 Naval Air Fighter School (N.A.F.S.) on Friday, 4 May, eager to begin flying. Four days later Winston Churchill announced Germany's defeat and Victory in Europe (VE) day was celebrated by the allies. The following day a short service of hymns and prayer was held and the Captain addressed them, uniting them in thankfulness and relief at the news. Although this was the end of the war in Europe, the Japanese were still a perceived threat to the Pacific and it was some time before Ritchie and Brown were relieved of service.

A range of training was undertaken during the five to six weeks the men were based at Henstridge: cloud flying, parallel course attacks, section attacks, twenty thousand feet attacks, bomber attacks, aerobatics, and slow flying. At the end of six weeks, this aspect of their training was complete and they were once again on the move, back to Hinstock. On 11 May 1945 Ritchie finally flew the fighter plane which both he and Brown had set their sights on since joining the Air Force. The Spitfire was perceived by many at the time as the ultimate flying machine and only a percentage of those who trained with the New Zealand Air Force eventually piloted them while the remainder were employed in other areas such as navigation, gunnery and ground crew operations.

The Spitfire was a small aircraft with limited room for the pilot to sit and operate the controls and guns. Especially large men were therefore excluded. The Seafire which Ritchie flew was essentially a Spitfire but fitted with an arrester hook for deck landings. Ritchie and Brown goggled at their first sight of the machine which, with its four-bladed prop, they assumed was not long off the production line. After a short trip in a Master, they made their first solo flight in the high powered aircraft, both men agreeing that it was a 'pretty dicey affair'. The consensus was that generally all aircraft were similar once airborne but Ritchie and Brown agreed that the spitfire was different: they were very conscious of the G-force in turns and pulling out of dives. Their respective first landings were slightly ragged;

however both men felt confident in their ability to improve quickly and looked forward to the next day's flying.

Over the course of their time at Henstridge they forged close ties with several of the men, joining them in games of bridge, the odd snooker match and several pints of beer. Aside from one Scotsman, their fellow trainees for the course were English although the entire camp contained a mix of Commonwealth countrymen including two fellow New Zealanders. Additionally, the Women's Royal Naval Service (W.R.N.S., known as the Wrens) camp was nearby and, as time allowed, the two groups socialised together for picnics and the occasional dance. There were also some less pleasant incidents, in particular four fatalities which occurred over the course of five days which cast a shadow over the squadron. Everyone attended the funerals which had been arranged for the men, but little time was lost before training exercises recommenced.

Once the men were familiar with the operation of the Seafire, they were then engaged in formation and gunnery exercises. The now nine men (one had been a casualty of a bicycle accident while drunk and dislocated his neck after slamming into a telegraph pole) were then drafted to St Merryn in Cornwall for a fortnight's air firing training. Ritchie scored an average 4.92 to Brown's 5.67, no mean feat according to Brown who commented: 'I managed to beat the boy'.⁸⁰ Brown was quick to add that he managed to cause some damage to an aircraft when he stalled coming in to land twenty yards short of the designated spot. The plane eventually skidded to a halt on its belly with the prop ground down and cannon shells and wing panels trailing behind it. Brown was fortunate to emerge unscathed but endured some ribbing from his colleagues as well as a lecture from the Flight Commander.

The last and critical stage of their training involved deck landing practice: 'Airfield Dummy Deck Landings (A.D.D.L.S.) at D flight in Henstridge'. The

⁸⁰ Ritchie papers, copy of Geoff Brown's Wartime Diary No. 2.

training was fairly intensive and from 2 to 13 August, Ritchie took to the air at least once a day, and often two or three times.



Figure 38: Ritchie practising advanced deck landing. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.



Figure 39: Ritchie flying a Seafire. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Each pilot completed around one hundred landings controlled by bats as well as practising combat aerial shooting in pairs using a camera and Gyro Gunsight (G.G.S.). Ritchie and Brown then travelled with half of their fellow trainees to Ayr on the Clyde, arriving on Tuesday, 14 August, for the deck landings proper on HMS Ravager. That night, it was announced that the Japanese had just surrendered, prompting two days free of duty. Adverse weather conditions hindered their first deck landing attempt scheduled for 17 August but eventually there was adequate wind for the first group of four to make an attempt. Ritchie and Brown were in the second group and only Brown managed one landing before the training was called off due to lack of wind. It was four days later at 3.00 p.m. that a high wind enabled the ship to maintain steerage and reach the required speed of twenty-eight knots over the deck. Ritchie managed very good results and picked up the first wire on five of his eight attempts and the second wire for one landing. His fairly poor sixth and seventh wire for the remaining two landings lowered his average somewhat but he ended the day with an above average of six.

The difficulty of the deck landing was highlighted by two incidents which resulted in the death and serious injury of the pilots, events which were felt keenly by the men.⁸¹ Late in the day on 21 August fellow New Zealander Sub Lieutenant Clutha Libeau attempted a landing with disastrous consequences. Brown noted: 'He came over the carrier alone, made a very tight circuit and before the eyes of all on deck, stalled and spun into the sea from two or three hundred feet'.⁸² The Fairmile rescue motor launch was quick to be despatched to reach the point of impact but there was nothing anyone could do as the plane disappeared without trace and petrol appeared on the ocean's surface. The men were left somewhat jittery following this accident and the next day another of the group, Englishman Sub Lieutenant Dorman, was badly injured after crashing on the round-down or stern of the flight deck. While Ritchie and Brown achieved sound results overall, the two serious accidents coupled with countless minor prangs gave the course the ignominy of being the worst on record in recent times.

⁸¹ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2007.

⁸² Ritchie papers, copy of Geoff Brown's Wartime Diary No. 2.

Following the completion of the deck landings Brown and Ritchie were sent back to Henstridge to await further orders. On 25 August 1944 Ritchie took to the air once more in the late model Seafire XV. This was to be his last solo flight. Shortly afterwards, they received notice that leave was granted and with their belongings in tow, the two men made their way to London. Ritchie met up with his mother while Brown left for Brighton to fulfil Best Man duties for a compatriot who had met his future bride the previous Christmas. On Brown's return, they managed to fit in a visit to Lords cricket ground to watch a match between an English team and an Empire XI before catching a train at Euston Station for Windermere in the Lake District. They had arranged to stay at the cottage of Mrs Kay Bibby in the village of Chapel Stile while they waited for word from the Fleet Air Arm.⁸³ The cottage was adjacent to the Holy Trinity church where they attended Sunday service and met most of the village's inhabitants. The two friends attended the Hawkshead show's parade and hound trail and spent some happy hours cycling around the countryside taking in the local food and beer as well as travelling further afield to Grasmere and Ambleside. They spent most evenings at the nearby Langdale hotel where they downed ale and chatted amongst the other patrons. The weather was sunny, the people welcoming and notwithstanding the losses suffered, the relief that the war was finally over was evident.

Again under the provision of the Lady Ryder Scheme, Ritchie and Brown made their way north to Edinburgh mid-September where they spent one night at the King George and Queen Elizabeth Club in Castle Street. The next day they were taken to the residence of a rather elderly Miss E. M. Walker in St Johns Terrace, Corstorphine and joined several other personnel who were likewise resting or awaiting orders. They frequented the Officers Club and spent several evenings at the Cavendish dance hall but also found time to visit Edinburgh castle and the university. They watched from afar as the Royal family – King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and their two daughters Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret – visited the city from 26 to 27 September in celebration of victory in World War II. They visited the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) in Drem, East Lothian and it was

⁸³ Ibid.

here that Ritchie had his last flight in the cockpit of an aircraft: a twenty-minute dual familiarisation flight as second pilot to Acting Lieutenant Cole in an Anson I, a plane used for training pilots in multi-engined bombers.

Still kicking their heels, they left Edinburgh for Birmingham to stay for a week with Dr J. Vernon Griffiths and family. The Griffiths were generous and hospitable although the entertainment differed somewhat to that they had become accustomed to amongst their fellow service officers; the evening of Ritchie's twenty-fourth birthday was spent drinking tea amongst a multitude of youngsters at a children's party. During their stay Mrs Griffiths generously used her meagre petrol ration to show them some sights further afield including a visit to Henley-in-Aden and Shakespeare's residence at Stratford-on-Avon. Possibly the most entertaining evening was spent in the company of a family friend from Costa Rica who was referred to by everyone as OK since this appeared to be the sum total of his English although fortunately Mrs Griffiths's sister, Moira, was able to translate for them. Towards the end of the week word came through that their next destination was, at last, New Zealand.

A flurry of activity followed now that Ritchie and Brown knew that their departure from Britain was imminent. They made their way to a very crowded and noisy London and found a bed in the Gloucester Club since their usual haunt, the Fernleaf, was already full to capacity. A visit to Halifax House satisfied their immediate needs. They were given twenty pounds apiece and learned that it would still be some time before they set sail, possibly not until late November. With time to spare, they spent the next week meeting up with acquaintances and friends including Alex Baxter who had recently arrived from New Zealand with his wife, and they dined with Ritchie's mother and her companion at the Normandie Hotel in London.⁸⁴ Neither mother nor son knew it then but this was to be the last time that they saw or spoke to each other. In the early years following Ritchie's return to New Zealand, correspondence between the two was sporadic and eventually Jessie ceased writing. In respect for what Ritchie believed to be her

⁸⁴ At this time an upmarket West End Hotel.

unspoken wishes, Ritchie did not pursue the relationship. The only communication relating to Jessie after that time was from her lawyer in 1976 on the event of her death.

A week amongst the clamour and crush of London was as much as Ritchie and Brown could tolerate and they were soon on the move again visiting and farewelling friends at Scotsgrove House in Thames before making their way to nearby Oxford. There they visited the grave of Anita's only brother, twenty-two year old (George) Mansell Proctor, who had been recently killed in a flying accident during operational training. They spent several weeks at Oxford socialising with friends and were shown around the vicinity and the university's various colleges. In mid-November, they left Oxford for Southampton where the ship, Orion, their passage home, was berthed. They found the state on board appalling. It was grossly overcrowded and with only hammocks for beds, several hundred of the approximately two thousand Australian airmen walked off in protest before she set sail. Ritchie and Brown decided to weather the poor living conditions but the ship had barely left the coast of England when one of the engines failed. After an hour was spent unsuccessfully trying to repair the ship, it turned and headed rather slowly back to port. With further delays predicted they headed once more for London then travelled variously to acquaintances in Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Markham to see Vernon Griffiths's parents before they finally returned to Southampton via London.

The two men's departure aboard the *Rangitata*, a New Zealand Shipping Company vessel on 30 November proved more successful than the first attempt. Their fellow passengers included about two hundred English brides of Australian servicemen, children, naval officers and several hundred Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) servicemen. Their route took them down the coast of Portugal and between Africa and Spain where they spotted the Rock of Gibraltar. After passing through Pantelleroa and Malta they arrived at Port Said in the evening of 14 December. Their journey took them some distance from Suez which could be seen in the distance but directly past the group of islands known as the Seven

Sisters. The heat was oppressive and to pass the time Ritchie and Brown joined others in a bridge competition, managing a creditable third place.

Christmas Day was celebrated in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Food was served by rather merry stewards and several passengers including Ritchie and Brown imbibed beer that they had accumulated from allowable purchases on board, and at stopovers at Port Said and Aden. Father Christmas appeared at the children's party and handed out gifts to each child from a well decorated tree. Once the youngsters tired from their games and activities, the adults enjoyed an evening of loud music and singing while Boxing Day was spent recovering from their excesses. New Year's Day passed relatively uneventfully apart from being overtaken by another ship which also carried a large number of Australian and New Zealand airmen. The *Athlone Castle* had left Southampton a day earlier but stopped at two additional ports, Bombay and Perth, on the way. In early January the *Rangitata* was nearing its last port of call, Melbourne. Unfortunately Ritchie and Brown's luck at bridge had not held and without the means to top up their coffers were less enthusiastic than they might otherwise have been to disembark. A week later on 10 January 1946 they arrived at their final destination, Wellington. The following day the two men bid each other goodbye. Brown headed for Auckland by train via Palmerston North while Ritchie made his way south to Christchurch.

Chapter 4: Academic Life

Return to Civilian Life

Towards the end of the war, with peace on the horizon, most of the men serving with Ritchie became increasingly preoccupied with how they might support themselves and their families on their return to civilian life. Heartfelt congratulations were extended when a fellow officer heard word from family or friends that a job had been secured for him in New Zealand. Ritchie was not immune to such concerns as the time for arrival in his home country loomed. The last few months of 1945 spent studying music at Trinity College had helped Ritchie focus on music as a career choice; however he also knew that any post offered would need to have sufficient stimulus to appeal to him.

The day after Ritchie's arrival in New Zealand, the newly created position of Music Master at Christchurch Technical College was put forward for his consideration by Vernon Griffiths. Griffiths's ebullience as he spoke to Ritchie about the role was apparent as were the similarities between the post and Griffiths's position at Dunedin Technical College. Griffiths had already spoken to the college's Director, Dr David Ernest Hansen, about the future of music at the College and discussed the implementation of the Dunedin model there which, according to Griffiths, he was most receptive to.⁸⁵ The successful candidate would have the opportunity to create an environment where music was an integral part of both the school and the wider community. Ritchie could not meet Griffiths's enthusiasm and instead his heart sank as he listened to Griffiths expound the possibilities for music at the college. He was neither attracted to the position nor ready for such a high profile and demanding post. With a start date for the position just a few weeks away in early February, Ritchie knew immediately that he needed a much slower transition to civilian life. Anita, who had travelled from Dunedin to meet him in Christchurch, concurred: they both needed time to adjust

⁸⁵ 'Hansen, David Ernest (Dr), 1884-1972', *Alexander Turnbull Library: National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa*
<<https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ethesaurus.137823>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

to each other and family living. Ritchie had also been mulling over his options. He was hoping to pursue study for a specialist third year at Dunedin Teachers' College which had been offered to him in 1941. He turned the job down but in doing so, believed that he 'broke Griffith's heart' and returned to Dunedin with Anita.⁸⁶

Personally and professionally Ritchie was a very different person to his pre-war self and the reunion with Anita was not without some awkwardness. Their lives literally and figuratively had been worlds apart and the life that he and Anita had planned and hoped for in their youth had been irretrievably changed by the effects of war. Ritchie had left New Zealand a naïve and just-married young man, a hard-working student and eager serviceman, who had little time to become accustomed to domestic life. While Anita discovered the consequences of their first few nights of intimacy within a short time of Ritchie's departure from New Zealand, word of her pregnancy did not reach Ritchie for several months. Ritchie's early diary entries on foreign soil reflect his concern and love for Anita but as time passed he became increasingly preoccupied with life spent with his fellow officers and the social interaction that was to be had in the various places they were stationed. Although Ritchie was not engaged in combat, the daily environment and flight training, the flying accidents, the closeness of warring activity and the evidence of the bombing in London influenced his view of life and its fragility. He came back a very determined man focussed on forging a career in music.

Ritchie felt the onus of financial responsibility very keenly on his return to New Zealand. He still received income as a serviceman but he was aware that this would cease once the demobilisation process was complete within a few months in April. Largely unspoken, since 'people didn't talk about things the way they do today', he found the transition to domestic life overwhelming.⁸⁷ Fortunately, his request to take up the specialist third-year teacher training was approved. He was obliged, however, to convince the authorities that he had no wish to specialise in

⁸⁶ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2009.

⁸⁷ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2008.

physical education which the Department was urging him to do, rather than music. He relaxed into the routine of study and training, happy to be spending time in a role where there was little pressure to perform. He enjoyed going out on section teaching music to children in schools and very quickly gained confidence in his abilities.

Post-war New Zealand experienced a severe shortage of housing following the return of the servicemen from overseas. Houses for sale were expected to be first offered to the men and their families before the general population. In the middle of the first school term of 1946 Anita received a letter from a friend of her parents advising her that he was selling a property he owned in Christchurch. Ritchie recalled that ‘the grumpy old ex-baker’ was not particularly happy about the government’s rules around property sales but nevertheless suggested that if they wanted to come and live in Christchurch they could view his house in Bretts Road and buy it if they liked it. They were advised of the selling price along with the proviso that if they wanted to purchase the house there was a wireless mast at the property and that would cost them another fifty pounds ‘whatever the government said’.⁸⁸

Anita and Ritchie were quick to make their way to Christchurch and decided that owning the small house at 44 Bretts Road would serve them better than renting in Dunedin. Ritchie was successful in transferring his teacher training from Dunedin to Christchurch and they proceeded to pack up their life in Dunedin and prepare for the move north. On 15 May 1946, the family of three, with another little Ritchie on the way, moved into their new home. As was the norm for the times, Anita took care of the home and family and managed the household expenses and accounts. Ritchie struggled to meet the expectations of his roles as father and husband; he felt stifled in quiet suburbia and looked for opportunities to continue the single life he had become accustomed to. In time Anita resigned herself to Ritchie’s need for socialising – drinking and late nights out with friends and colleagues – realising that it made for a more harmonious existence. With their

⁸⁸ Ibid.

living arrangements secure and the happy arrival of second daughter Jennifer Louise on 8 October 1946, the couple settled into domesticity.

Ritchie thrived at the Christchurch Teachers College where musical instruction was provided by English-born Ernest Jenner, Griffiths's successor in 1932. He had enjoyed his time with music lecturer George Wilkinson in Dunedin well enough and he thought him sound in his musical knowledge but Ritchie found Jenner to be a much more innovative and inspiring musician. Jenner had a broad range of musical expertise as an accomplished pianist and conductor and it was the latter in particular which proved invaluable to Ritchie. With Jenner's blessing Ritchie was able to hone his musicianship skills by conducting at every possible opportunity at the college. Within six months of his arrival in Christchurch he had completed his teacher training and once again a potential position was suggested by Vernon Griffiths. This time, however, Ritchie was confident of the post's suitability and appeal, and after due process he accepted the position of Junior Lecturer of music at Canterbury University College.

When Ritchie accepted his position at the university in late 1946, the Music Department consisted of a staff of three: assistant lecturer Clare Peach, part-time assistant (later secretary) Margaret (Peggy) Hadden-Jones, and Vernon Griffiths.⁸⁹ Vernon Griffiths's appointment as Chair of Music had been made mid-1942 following the retirement of the first Professor of Music, John Bradshaw, due to ill health. Frederick Page, who had been appointed as temporary lecturer while the University Council decided on a replacement for Bradshaw and who likely had been a contender for the role, was no longer required. The University Council's confidence in Griffiths as the suitable candidate in Christchurch set the scene for the path that music in Canterbury would follow for a number of years hence. That decision was also crucial to the life in music that John Ritchie would enjoy.

From the time of his appointment Griffiths had built up the music department at the university to such an extent that within a year, additional help was needed to

⁸⁹ Jennings, pp. 88-89.

both accommodate a rise in student numbers and to allow Griffiths to participate further and expand in musical activities in the wider community. Clare Peach, in talking about her own time at Canterbury University (1943-1958), recalled the informal way she was offered the job as an assistant – although this was perhaps not unusual at this time with so many men absent at war.⁹⁰ She had recently graduated with a Bachelor of Music from Otago University and at the suggestion and encouragement of her father, was considering cross-crediting papers for a Bachelor of Arts in order to enrol for a Master of Arts. She could not remember the exact occasion but she was in her hometown Dunedin standing near Victor Galway as he played the piano. At some point there was a break in the proceedings and Galway turned to her and said: ‘Dr Griffiths wants an assistant just to help out a bit. Are you interested?’. Peach, who had attended Griffiths’s evening classes and was very much in awe of his abilities as a musician and public figure immediately demurred ‘no, oh no’ believing herself far too inexperienced for such an important role.⁹¹ Nonetheless, she must have been persuaded otherwise since she found herself ensconced in lodgings at St Margaret’s School boarding house in Christchurch a short time later, learning the art of teaching Harmony I to first year music students under the guidance of Griffiths.

Peach assumed that Griffiths and Galway, who were well known in musical society and to each other, had discussed Griffiths’s increasing need for staff and had corresponded over her suitability as his assistant. It was only later, the precise details forgotten, that she became aware that the matter of who might be given the assistant’s job had been the source of some debate in the city and that this had caused a split in the Christchurch music scene. Many considered Douglas Lilburn to be the natural choice as lecturer in music at the university and would be the obvious successor to Griffiths in due course. Griffiths, however, was not of the mind to offer the position to Lilburn. He quite naturally wanted people around him who would support his musical ideals. His philosophy saw music at the heart

⁹⁰ Clare Peach, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 11 May 2010). Recording and transcript held by the author.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

of a community whether that community was the university, schools, in the workplace or in the wider population. This did not mean inferior musicianship in participants or leaders; to the contrary, the directors and teachers who delivered the music were required to be highly skilled and trained. Not surprisingly, the music department appointments reflected Griffiths's personal beliefs and taste in music. Peach believed that in offering her the job, Griffiths was of the mind that she would see them through until the war was over by which time a suitable male applicant would be on the horizon. As a young woman of the 1940s, it was quite naturally assumed that she would work only until she married and subsequently produced children. As it happened, while Clare did marry in time, to returned serviceman, Lloyd Peach who arrived at Canterbury to undertake music studies, she continued to work even after the birth of their two offspring.

Although Griffiths may have had faith in her abilities, Peach was conscious of her own lack of teaching knowledge. She observed the blank faces of her students during her first music class and put their apparent incomprehension down to her lack of experience and training, and the manner in which she was explaining musical concepts. It was only when she sat in on Griffiths as he delivered the following lecture that she realised that the issue with her delivery was the level of knowledge she had assumed the students had. Griffiths spent the entire time elucidating the fundamentals of the tonic and dominant while Peach had talked her way through a term, if not a whole year's work, in a single lesson. She became accustomed to the pace at which she should teach and planned the lessons accordingly. She was also extremely busy. At the quiet insistence of her father, she pursued plans for further study and her days comprised of teaching, attending classes, and her own research. She completed her thesis 'Logic and Music' and graduated with an MA in Philosophy in 1956. She returned an emphatic 'no' when her ever watchful father proposed that she should now proceed to study for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

Griffiths's two (female) staff members were employed as assistant and assistant lecturer thus Ritchie's appointment in 1946 was the first time a second lecturing role within the department had been offered. It is quite possible that Griffiths

proposed the position to the university council with Ritchie in mind but in any event it was sanctioned sometime between Ritchie's return to New Zealand and the completion of his teacher training later that year. While Jennings's *Music at Canterbury: A Centennial History of the School of Music University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, 1891-1991: Together with a Roll of Graduates* notes Ritchie's position as 'Junior lecturer' from 1946-1948, Ritchie's recollection was that a rather informal approach was taken while he worked at the university in late 1946 and that his position as Junior Lecturer came into effect at the start of 1947. This is reflected in a testimonial for Ritchie written by Victor Galway dated 14 December 1946, and by his staff record card.⁹²

Ritchie's staff card also documents his prior employment as a student teacher employed by the Canterbury Education Board. Ritchie recalled that some concessions were made in terms of his obligations as a student teacher with receipt of a bursary, which allowed him to accept the lecturing position at the university rather than a school teaching post. He also began working towards a Bachelor of Arts degree, obtaining an exemption from the War Concessions Committee of two stage one optional units and granted the right to claim Music I, Music II and Education I from his MusB towards the BA. This left just one arts subject for each of Stage I and III. By the end of the year he had passed English and History and two years later History II, a necessary stepping stone to the final Stage III paper.⁹³

Vernon Griffiths was a meticulous record keeper: his papers which comprise eighty-four scrapbooks and numerous other documents, now housed in the Macmillan Brown Library at the University of Canterbury, bear testament to a man who wanted to fully chronicle his working musical life.⁹⁴ From 1946 Ritchie, too, began a similar process, cutting and pasting newspaper clippings into the

⁹² Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1940-1948; Ritchie papers, Confidential Staff Record Card copy.

⁹³ There appears to be no extant evidence confirming that the stage III paper to complete the degree was done.

⁹⁴ Christchurch, Kā Kohika o Macmillan Brown, Thomas Vernon Griffiths papers FD743, <http://kohika.canterbury.ac.nz/opac_canterbury/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/Description/Web_desc_det_rep?sessionsearch&fld=SISN&exp=150669> [accessed 19 July 2019].

pages of a scrapbook. It is one of the ways in which Ritchie replicated Griffiths's habits although he fell rather short in terms of the number of records and the length of time he continued to create the records; along with a few notebooks and appointment diaries, a total of eleven scrapbooks from 1946-1966 were filled before the newspaper cuttings and letters began piling up in boxes for later attention. Ritchie was of a different generation and had differing personal circumstances to Griffiths; he was a married father in his early twenties whereas Griffiths was a bachelor until the age of fifty. Personalities may also have played a part. Ritchie was happy to spend his time across a wide range of activities and enjoyed immensely his time spent socialising with friends as they debated many topics from sports and politics to music. In a nutshell, with the best will in the world, Ritchie did not always have the time to be diligent about the matter.

Nonetheless, Ritchie's scrapbooks provide insight into his musical life in Canterbury from 1946. The first scrapbook is marked 1940-48 although the order of papers indicates it was started in 1946 with several items from Ritchie's collection of paraphernalia from the previous six years being inserted randomly throughout. The first entries comprise a series of six articles (Number IV is missing) penned by Vernon Griffiths entitled *Culture and Music in New Zealand*. These were published in the Catholic periodical *The New Zealand Tablet* in 1946. Griffiths's articles are fairly substantial although a high proportion of the material is quotations which are used to validate his views. As might be expected for such a publication, they also allude to music as a possible aid for man to return to a way of life which satisfies them without reward and regenerates and enlivens them, leading them back to the roots of existence and, perhaps to 'God's truth'. Underlying his beliefs inherent in the writing is the idea that music reflects the culture of the society in which it is produced whether good or bad. Griffiths expressed the view that culture should be rooted in the soil and the people of small communities, and that it should 'be allowed to grow up from below' rather than be imposed from above. He also expressed his disapproval of any form of centralised organisation which would impose its view on the (smaller) communities by bureaucratic means. His criticism is directed at the idea of a National Broadcasting Service Conservatorium, a much debated concept which

had support amongst a number of musicians at the time and which was the antithesis of his own personal beliefs.

It might be expected that the negative effects felt by Ritchie on his musical career which he attributed to his time spent as a serviceman away from Griffiths and the musical environment in Dunedin, would have been nullified by his appointment at Canterbury University but appearances can be deceptive. While Ritchie had certainly enjoyed a good social life and was free of frontline duties in the services in Britain, the disruption to his studies during this time troubled him throughout his life. Ritchie did not dwell on it or speak of it openly as he was generally of an optimistic outlook and reluctant to complain when others had fared much worse than him, but he did feel a sense of displacement. He was conscious of time lost and a lack of continuity particularly as it related to composing, a view which was not altered by the opportunities which an academic career offered. He bemoaned his lack of involvement in music over the war period but nonetheless, where possible, he had attended performances, met and fraternised with musicians and, as previously stated, attended classes at Trinity College London. While Griffiths may have believed that Ritchie would follow his path into teaching and hold similar ideals and goals related to music in the community, Ritchie's musical passion really lay elsewhere; it was his composition work which he believed had suffered and which he was most keen to pursue.

In terms of musical life in the city, Ritchie's move to Christchurch was well timed and the resilience gained from his early life served him well as he endeavoured to sustain family life while finding his own place in music. He had arrived in time for the Christchurch Civic Musical Festival, a showcase of Canterbury's musicians, which took place towards the end of 1946. In the week from Saturday, 21 September, orchestras, chamber groups and choirs performed to large audiences at the Civic and Radiant Theatres. This musical feast included The Christchurch Harmonic Society choir conducted by its founder Victor C Peters, The Christchurch Liederkränzchen under its director Alfred Worlsley, The Christchurch Orpheus Choir, several choirs from smaller Canterbury towns including Methven, Rangiora, Temuka and Ashburton, the 3YA Orchestra with

soloists Ernest Empson (1880-1970) and Clare Peach (piano), soprano Alison Cordery, a trio consisting of violinist Gladys Vincent, Frances Bate and pianist Ernest Jenner, and several other choral and chamber groups.

The concert opened with a performance of Haydn's *Creation* by the combined choirs, an augmented 3YA orchestra with Maurice Till on piano and soloists soprano Valerie Pepler, tenor Thomas E. West and bass Gerald Christeller. Griffiths, who critiqued this performance for the *Press* was generally complimentary: he praised the singing of the choruses in Haydn's work and the soloists who sang 'delightfully' in the trios; he observed that there was a 'marked improvement' of the 3YA orchestra's playing in their accompaniment; and he was most favourable in his praise for Victor Peter's conducting skills and for his contribution to New Zealand choral music over the previous two decades. Further reviews of the various concerts over the festival week by Griffiths provided an insight into the music being performed. These included works by Mozart, Mendelssohn, nineteenth-century Norwegian composer Johan Svendsen and Bizet as well as a few contemporary offerings, most notably *River Avon* by Frank Hutchens, the orchestra's conductor. Of this work, Griffiths wrote that he believed Hutchens to be a gifted composer whose music showed influences from the French Impressionists.

Griffiths, referred to by the initials V.G., was a regular contributor for the *Press* just as he had been for the *Otago Daily Times* in Dunedin. His services as a music writer were also called upon for other publications; the *Official Organ of Canterbury Music Festival Committee* produced a free four-page printed promotional newspaper two weeks prior to the festival's start which featured an article by Griffiths on its front page. Griffiths took the opportunity to expound his views on music and culture: 'Music is a social thing, the one universal language, the means of expression most easily available to the community and the individual [...] music, as an expression of culture, reflects mankind's reactions to the experience of living'. Much of his writings throughout the festival and beyond reflected this view, and, considered in retrospect, it is likely that Ritchie agreed with it and was influenced by this position. Even the review of the festival's

inaugural concert began with a paragraph on the subject of community music as a demonstration of community culture. Indeed, Griffiths's opening statement which preceded this notion appeared to be pointed and seemingly without context: 'Of all the erroneous ideas about culture, one of the most fundamentally wrong is that it belongs only to esoteric groups of leisured persons'.

This remark may have been referring to the group of artists and musicians, including Douglas Lilburn, who had been active creatively in Christchurch since the early 1940s. Formed from a shared and supportive view of each following their own creative direction, their lifestyle would have appeared as the antithesis of Griffiths's ideals and work ethic. In *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, Philip Norman describes the events which appear to have precipitated Lilburn's departure from the city. In September 1945 a memorial concert for pianist Noel Newson (1911-1944) was held at the Civic Theatre in Christchurch. Lilburn composed and conducted the opening work *Elegy*, during which a mistaken entry was made by one of the performers. It appears Lilburn in turn made his own error as conductor in stopping the performance and after he attempted one or two unsuccessful restarts, gathered up the music and left the stage. He returned and addressed the audience but his words were lost to all but a few close to him in the commotion which ensued. A flurry of letters appeared in the papers over the following days and Lilburn was invited to respond to one such critical epistle. Lilburn replied with an acknowledgement of his own failings but followed this with an allusion to the soloist's mistakes, leaving the reader in no doubt as to who had erred first during the performance. Such an apology which shifted the blame, predictably only added fuel to the fire and Lilburn was 'portrayed as the villain'.⁹⁵

The public could have forgiven Lilburn for the abrupt ending to the work on the night, but in pointing out the singer whose actions precipitated the incident, he raised their ire. Many thought his response was unprofessional and mean-spirited particularly in light of the generosity shown by the performers, all of whom had donated their time for the concert. Possibly Griffiths might have expected

⁹⁵ Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 121.

Lilburn's rejection by local musical circles in Canterbury to become more widespread. But whilst he was shunned in the Christchurch music scene in particular, others were keen to recognize him as a gifted New Zealand composer. Owen Jensen invited him to attend the first Cambridge Summer Music School which was held soon after from 26 January to 2 February 1946 as composer in residence. His opening address, later edited and published as *A Search for Tradition* might be considered the cornerstone of the history of New Zealand composition.⁹⁶ Ritchie's absence from New Zealand and music circles in the period leading up to this event meant that the musical machinations which followed did not hold any particular significance for him at the time; additionally he was preoccupied with securing his own musical position in Christchurch. The two composers' paths did not cross in any meaningful way since Lilburn not only mixed in different circles; by 1950 he had moved permanently to Wellington.

Canterbury University Years – The Beginning

In the later part of 1946 Ritchie assisted at the university and published several music performance reviews. The latter was likely as a result of Griffiths's influence and support; it would have assisted Ritchie financially as well as giving him the ability to gain experience and exposure in the wider music arena. The various positions generated sufficient earnings to sustain his family until his Junior Lectureship commenced permanently on 1 February 1947. Ritchie was once more in an environment which embodied Griffiths's ideals, and an active participant – and ultimately leader – in the musical society he would inhabit for the remainder of his life. Upon his arrival at Canterbury University College, Ritchie spent time familiarising himself with his new position and building friendships and collegiate relationships. He felt he performed adequately in the classroom and was well practised in teaching, dispelling any doubts he had earlier on his return to New Zealand. Griffiths was very supportive of Ritchie's endeavours and, aside from reviewing, encouraged further musical activities such as conducting. Ritchie too was highly motivated to involve himself in the various

⁹⁶ Norman, thesis, p. 422.

music opportunities in the community and academic arena. He was confident in leadership roles having undertaken them as a senior student at Griffiths's behest at King Edward Technical College.

Thus, Ritchie's time was increasingly taken up with his new life in Christchurch: teaching, choir directing and, for a time, reviewing. Towards the latter part of 1946 J.A.R. was a regular contributor to the *Press* music review column superseding V.G., his mentor. Musical groups of varying ability and experience were appraised by Ritchie, generally complimentary, from the Eroica Club's 'high standard of work' second concert and a 'notable programme' of organ music presented by Vernon Griffiths and Arthur Lilly, to a recital of New Zealand composers' works – a 'concert of high standard' – at the Canterbury University College Hall. Considering Griffiths's position and influence in Christchurch at the time, the repertoire was unlikely to have consisted of avant-garde music: composers included Wainwright Morgan, Victor Galway and Ernest Jenner. Griffiths's and Morgan's performance of Galway's *Prelude and Fugue for Two Pianos* 'showed the composer's facility of the contrapuntal art and mastery of fugal form' wrote Ritchie while Charles Martin's piano trio *Lullaby* was pronounced 'an unpretentious piece of salon music'.

Ritchie also attended and reviewed a New Zealand Composers' Concert featuring *Maori Suite* for piano by Mary Martin, a composition which drew on traditional Maori chants and produced a 'spirited rendering...[with an] ebullient War Dance and a Poi Dance'.⁹⁷ Morgan's performance of *Air, Variations, and Fugue for Piano* composed by Ronald Tremain was well received and some songs by the same composer were likened to the 'finest modern English songs' but Ritchie also noted 'When this similarity is not apparent [...] the result is most effective'.⁹⁸ The latter comment is an indication that perhaps, irrespective of his training and Griffiths's influence, Ritchie preferred a degree of originality in new music. The final original composition of the evening was a set of accompanied songs by

⁹⁷ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1940-1948.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

William Trussell, curiously followed by some chamber music of John Ireland and Vincent D'Indy 'to give balance to the programme'. Whether the latter remark refers to the balancing of styles or ensuring the audience is left with something familiar at the recital's end is not known but for whatever reason, it was deemed necessary to include music by non-New Zealand composers at this 'N.Z. Composers' concert.

If Ritchie had any lingering doubt about his decision earlier in the year, his attendance as critic at the Christchurch Technical College's first concert with the recently-appointed music specialist confirmed for him that he had been right in refusing the position which was later filled by Robert Perks.⁹⁹ Ritchie headed his review with 'Impressive Start Made' and was generally diplomatic in his comments: 'incidental items all of a high standard' and 'boys' choir also sang with pleasing tone', but his remark in the opening paragraph revealed a modicum of insensitivity: 'Success in this work largely depends upon enthusiasm. In the orchestral work, little more than enthusiasm was apparent'. This may have dealt a sharp blow to the performers who were after all mainly children, many new to music, but the criticism was softened somewhat with an ensuing remark which suggested that nevertheless there was 'sufficient to indicate that, given time, the school will fill a musically important place in the community'. Ritchie admired the work that Griffiths and Perks undertook tremendously. He knew that without such dedication he would not have received the quality and depth of musical instruction during his school years; nonetheless this had also opened up a musical world which he could not have foreseen, that of his own creative self. Organising and administering instruction to children, he considered, would have directed energy and time away from those activities which were of most importance to him, especially composition.

The music department's rooms were situated in the west wing of the university while Ritchie's office overlooked Rolleston Ave towards the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. It was situated on the third floor just above Griffiths's who

⁹⁹ Ibid.

occupied the largest of the available music rooms.¹⁰⁰ Peach was down the corridor from Griffiths and she remembered that he would often look in to enquire how she was doing and to discuss teaching matters. Both lectures and concerts were held in the Great Hall where good use was made of the piano for demonstration purposes in harmony and counterpoint classes. Ritchie was a confident teacher which he attributed in large part to his specialist teacher training, believing it to be fundamental to his skill as an educator. He opined strongly that all university academics ought to gain a teaching qualification before entering tertiary teaching and that the practice of employing academic staff solely for their expert subject knowledge was flawed.¹⁰¹ He considered that all teaching required specific skills which could only be taught by specialist trainers and that the quality of tertiary education suffered as a result of ill-prepared staff. Peach's experience of her first lecture could be a case in point although she was quick to remedy her error. In these early working years, Ritchie continued to develop not just as a lecturer but also as a director, conductor and arranger with a number of groups in Canterbury.

These additional activities were initially facilitated by Griffiths who was well known through his position at the university and his involvement with the Christchurch Civic Music Council Incorporated (CCMC), formerly the Canterbury Music Festival Committee.¹⁰² The committee's original formation had been for the purpose of organising musical events for the New Zealand Centennial celebrations of 1940. Chaired by Mr Thomas Andrews, members included those from the musical community such as Andersen Tyrer, Victor Peters, Dr Bradshaw, and Frederick Page amongst others. In July 1941, a special Christchurch City Council meeting took place with invited musical society representatives at which it was determined that a music festival committee be formed on a permanent footing. The committee appears to have struggled to gain traction for a couple of years, likely in part or wholly exacerbated by the war, however revived impetus saw a newly elected Executive which included Griffiths at its first Annual General

¹⁰⁰ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2008.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Peter D. Barton, *Music in the City: A History of the Christchurch Civic Music Council 1941-1991* (Christchurch: Christchurch Civic Music Council, 1991), pp. 3, 11.

Meeting in October 1943. The members were either practising or past amateur musicians and all were actively engaged in furthering music in society. Professor of History and Political Science and past rector (1928-1941) of Canterbury University, Dr James Hight, was one such member. He was a violin collector and had been an orchestral violinist in his youth.¹⁰³ In 1944 recently elected city councillor, James Lawrence Hay (in 1961 Sir James Hay), a music enthusiast who had developed a love of music in his formative years playing the cornet in his local brass band in Lawrence and a man with a strong sense of social responsibility, succeeded Andrews as the committee's chairman.¹⁰⁴

Griffiths found in Hay an empathic supporter of his own views of music in the community and both men saw the need to promote musicianship and performance of the various local groups to the highest standard while maintaining their individual character. In 1946 Griffiths made his presence keenly felt in a comprehensive document entitled *The Formation of a Civic Philharmonic Society*. Fellow-executive members Christ Church Cathedral's organist and choirmaster C. Foster Browne and Christchurch Harmonic Society conductor Victor Peters are credited for assisting with the writing up of the report; however the argument for the suggested new organisation bears the hallmarks of Griffiths's thinking and mirrors those espoused in the introductory paragraphs of the 1946 festival reviews which he authored. By this time Griffiths had persuaded Hay to include a choir as one of the activities available to children who joined the Hay's store Junior League, an initiative which encouraged customer loyalty. The choir, conducted by baritone A. G. Thompson (and later music teacher Clifton Cook), comprised one hundred children aged between seven and thirteen selected from around three hundred applicants. As reviewer for the choir's second concert in 1946, Ritchie's criticism of the children's singing again lacked tact somewhat, by suggesting, just

¹⁰³ N. C. Phillips, 'Hight, James', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, (1998, 2006) in The Encyclopedia of New Zealand <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3h23/hight-james>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

¹⁰⁴ Geoffrey W. Rice, 'Hay, James Lawrence', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (2000), in The Encyclopedia of New Zealand <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/5h11/hay-james-lawrence>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

as he had for the Technical College's recital, that its members' enthusiasm was not quite matched by their performance.

Ritchie also ventured into radio. On 21 May 1948 he was the invited guest on the thirteenth presentation of 3YA's half hour evening programme Desert Island Discs. Appropriated from the United Kingdom where it had first aired in 1942 (and with some format changes continues today), the programme was designed to entertain its listeners by the guest who assumed the role of a desert island castaway and relayed their (scripted) story interspersed with music. The castaway introduced their selection of music recordings and presented each around a tale which described the unfortunate circumstances of their island stranding. Ritchie's choice of six gramophone records was explained as a reflection of the three activities his existence would comprise under such circumstances: physical exercise, mental exercise and periods of contemplation and reminiscence.¹⁰⁵ His humour was evident in his opening work, Bach's Gigue-Fugue: 'Apart from raft-building, sail-making and big or small game hunting, I think my daily routine would allow me an hour or two in the practise of dancing [...] What finer mental exercise can be afforded a musician than the study of the intricacies of a well-wrought fugal composition?'. His contemplative music of Bach chorales, the second movement of Grieg's piano concerto in A minor and two solo songs by Delius was followed by 'something which will encourage my propensity for dancing', Gustav Holst's 'Dargason' from *St Paul's Suite*. He finished with Elgar's Variation No. 8 and Nimrod No. 9 because 'I should probably have to be something of a Nimrod myself to survive on my island'.¹⁰⁶

Keen to utilise radio as an educational aid, Ritchie wrote to Lloyd Hunter at 3YA the following year to ask if he would consider broadcasting the set works under study by students at Canterbury at approximately the same time as lectures were delivered. To assist with programming he provided Hunter with a comprehensive list covering the music for stages I, II and III from May to October, suggesting

¹⁰⁵ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1940-1948, 'Desert Island Discs 3YA' (script), 21 May 1948'.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

that such an enterprise might not only assist enrolled students but also have an indirect positive consequence in encouraging intelligent listening by the general audience. Many of the syllabus works belonged to the masters: Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, Handel, Haydn and Mozart together with a range of madrigals, but there were some more modern works by nineteenth and twentieth-century composers including Elgar, Dvořák, Liszt, Stanford, Wagner, Delius, Sibelius, John Ireland, and Vaughan Williams.

An abundance of greeting cards for Christmas 1948 from colleagues, musicians, friends (in Christchurch and elsewhere), and relatives reflected the Ritchie family's settled home life in Christchurch. It was to be another two years before third daughter Elizabeth was born and in the meantime Anita was responsible for two youngsters: Judith who was nearly four years of age and two year old Jennifer. Ritchie was happy to leave most of the parenting to Anita and in fact believed this to be the right thing for family life. Ritchie loved his children but he had no qualms in secluding himself away to attend to correspondence and other matters, or when he wanted to compose. Anita continued to sing as much as she was able and was engaged for a variety of recitals over a number of years. While Ritchie strongly supported her as singer, his attention was very much focussed on his own plans and needs and it was only later in life (certainly as he spoke during our interviews) that he regretted his lack of attention to her singing career. Like many of the times, the household was generally left to his wife to attend to, and his paternal attitude could be summed up in his own words, said during an interview as he spoke of a time a few years after their move to Christchurch: 'I looked after the kids quite a lot then because they were old enough to look after themselves'.¹⁰⁷

On 1 February 1949 Ritchie was rewarded for his service to the university by a promotion to Lecturer, a position which also came with a welcome salary increase. He joined Peach who had progressed to lecturer from assistant lecturer the previous year. A secretarial role for the department had also been formalised and fulfilled by Margaret Hadden-Jones who moved from the assistant's role. While

¹⁰⁷ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2008.

Peach remained on the staff full time for a further eight years, lecturer was the highest level she attained; however Ritchie's position as Griffiths's right hand man became more prominent during this period. His roles outside of the university also mirrored those of Griffiths's community oriented musical work of reviewing, conducting and public speaking. As Head of Music at the university, Griffiths was regularly called on to present at various educational and public events, and as Ritchie became known in Christchurch circles, he too was offered similar engagements.

One of Ritchie's earliest addresses was in place of Vernon Griffiths at a meeting of the Christchurch Boys' High School Parent-Teacher Association.¹⁰⁸ The speech on the topic of school music and performance may have been written in part by Griffiths since certain references echo his sentiments: 'The music should be based on the culture of the people in its broadest sense – folk songs, sea shanties, national music'. Similarly, the discourse on how to treat adolescent singers within the context of music organisation in schools reiterated the methods Griffiths had implemented at King Edward Technical College. The style, however, differed from Griffiths's writings of a similar period. Ritchie's direct manner inherent in the interviews conducted for this study can be readily perceived, and it was apparent that regardless of Griffiths's earlier influence, Ritchie now had his own views on matters and could confidently express them.

Locally, 1950 marked the deaths of two important figures: the first Professor of Music at Canterbury University, Dr. J. C. Bradshaw, and prominent musician Alfred Bunz (b. 1876). As well as being a practising organist, pianist and conductor, Bunz, as foundation Vice-President of the Christchurch Civic Music Council and instrumental in the procurement of two grand pianos for the city, was missed for his expertise in local musical matters. The pianos, a Challen and a Welmar, only arrived by ship in early 1950 for the Radiant and Civic Theatres. Notwithstanding, it was a highly active musical year in Canterbury as its

¹⁰⁸ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1940-1948, press cutting [n.d.].

centennial celebrations provided opportunities for administration, performances, and, in Ritchie's case, composing.

Additionally, plans were underway early in the year to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of the establishment of structured choral societies in the South Island. By this time, aside from his university lecturing, and composing which he endeavoured to maintain, Ritchie became increasingly involved with a range of community based musical activities. As current director of the Addington Workshops Choir, which he had been appointed to soon after his arrival in Christchurch, he arranged a five-day tour of the Buller District for the group. This consisted of non-musical activities for the workers such as visits to Punakaiki and the Stockton open cast mine, and a series of four concerts. He accepted the position of Vice-President of the Orpheus Choir in February; he served on the music committee of the Christchurch Civic Music Council; weekly lunchtime concerts were scheduled and held in the College Hall on Thursdays at 1.15 p.m.; a series of twenty-four lectures beginning February 24th entitled 'Music and Musicians from 1550 to 1950' was conducted by Griffiths and Ritchie on Tuesday evenings from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m.; and the Workers' Education Association (WEA) appointed him as Tutor for a series of twelve classes held at the university on Monday evenings. Entitled 'Appreciation of Music through Choral Singing', there was also provision for an extension of the course should interest and numbers warrant it.

In May 1950 Ritchie, along with most of the Canterbury University music department staff, travelled north to teach at a vacation school at Whanganui, a leadership community music programme under the auspices of the Regional Council of Adult Education, Victoria University College.¹⁰⁹ Joined by Frank Callaway (Director of Music at the Dunedin Technical College), Theodore Staples (Director of Music in Dunedin while Callaway had been overseas), Ralph Lilly (Director of Music, Nelson), Leonard White (Papanui Technical College), Carl Smith (Christchurch solo and choral singer) and a senior Adult Education tutor

¹⁰⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1948-1949, Music in the Community programme; spelt Wanganui at the time, the orthography was officially changed to Whanganui in 2015.

from the region, Mr L.M.H Cave, the Canterbury staff led by Griffiths gave instruction on a range of topics over ten days between 10 and 20 May. Classes were held to accommodate a range of musical activities in current practice and included choir training, orchestral and chamber group tuition, conducting, music selection, composing and arranging, as well as bamboo pipe making and playing, and English folk dancing. Rehearsals were held each day in preparation for a public demonstration concert which was held in the Whanganui Opera House near the end of the school programme. The beginning addresses by Griffiths and Ritchie were reported on in local newspaper, *The Wanganui Herald*: 'Music reflects the life and thought of the age and the community which produces it'.¹¹⁰

Griffiths spoke of his concern at the decline in music making by the population which he attributed to materialism stemming from the lack of religious faith. While he understood that you could not mistake music for religion, in his view it certainly had similar restorative powers and the lack of it in a community was having a detrimental effect on society. The purpose of the school was to regenerate music in the population – in schools, churches and rural areas – with leaders who could provide the means of improving musical standards by good training and enthusiasm. Ritchie's discourse also focussed on increasing the numbers involved in music-making throughout the country in both rural and urban areas where music was mainly centred. He endorsed the government's measures currently in place which encouraged people to move to rural areas and spoke of music as benefiting society. He cited the Addington Workshops Choir as an example of how leaders might achieve the best results from groups where music was provided which suited the abilities of the singers and where new elements were introduced progressively. Part-singing could thus be achieved even though all but one of the group's members currently had no previous choral experience. The importance for leaders to strive for perfection so that improvements were always made was stressed.

¹¹⁰ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1948-1949.

Community engagements in association with the Adult Education Department such as the Whanganui music school occurred regularly over this period. A more condensed but similarly run Music in the Community vacation music school was held in Timaru in August of 1950 and a Music Leadership School in Ashburton the following year. Also in 1951, a week-long vacation music school was held at the Sumner School for Deaf in which Ritchie, Vernon Griffiths, Ralph Lilly, Frank Callaway, Leonard White, Dale Mancer and C. Foster Browne provided instruction for a variety of activities and classes.¹¹¹ Griffiths and Ritchie, together with the Addington Workshops Male Voice Choir performed at The Grand Concert of the Geraldine Community Festival in April and again at the June Darfield-Sheffield Community Festival.

This programme was sponsored by the Adult Education Department, Canterbury College and consisted of five events both musical and non-musical. Griffiths headed a Music Demonstration with the Addington Choir and Ritchie conducted the same choir in a programme which included some of his own arrangements. Ritchie addressed the festival's audience in Darfield prior to its performance: 'Culture is a result of what men and women do for a living [...] It stands to reason that if we don't do anything then there is little chance of us ever having a culture of our own'. He urged residents to participate in musical activities within their own community so they would gain true appreciation of music: that which could not be obtained by simply attending concerts of visiting groups. He also suggested that folk music as the music of true culture was the 'music with a message for the average man' and further, if New Zealand society was to become truly cultured then its people needed to look towards this music rather than imitating others', particularly the 'worst elements' of the American culture.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Originally named after the Christchurch suburb of Sumner in which it resides, the school was renamed in 1980 after its first principal Gerrit van Asch, and is now known as the van Asch Deaf Education Centre.

Dennis Tod, 'Sumner School for the Deaf 100 Years Centenary Celebration', *Sign DNA National Archive New Zealand*, (1980) <<https://signdna.org/video/sumner-school-for-the-deaf-100-years-centenary-celebration/>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

¹¹² Refers to the American popular culture which had disseminated via radio and later television.

Ritchie was not the only classical musician of the times to reject popular musical styles although a penchant for jazz saw him more tolerant than many. He had attended a jazz performance in the Royal Albert Hall during his time as a serviceman and thoroughly enjoyed it. Music programmes in New Zealand during this time were strongly debated in the newspapers with a variety of opinions expressed in letters to newspaper editors and in the reviews of concerts and speeches. The National Orchestra's repertoire during the week long Auckland Music Festival proved controversial because the concerts included *Capriccio Italien* by Tchaikovsky which was considered too light by the classical aficionados who attended. Newly appointed conductor, Irishman Michael Bowles, surprised by the criticism, responded: 'It was most important that intellectual snobbery about music in New Zealand be avoided'.¹¹³ He added that diversity of music in programmes, such as was heard elsewhere, was needed in New Zealand to satisfy a range of musical preferences.

Anita Ritchie, too, was in demand during this time with regular performances in both Canterbury and further afield in the South Island as well as participating in studio recitals for broadcasting. Anita was rewarded financially for her appearances as indicated in a letter from the New Zealand Broadcasting Service (NZBS) received in 1950: 'Judged on your last recital [...], the Listening Committee has authorised an increase in your fee to £3.3.0 for future solo recitals'.¹¹⁴ Together with Jean Baker, Alfred Walmsley and Don McInnes, Anita was a soloist in Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* for the Invercargill Musical Union on 27 June for which she was paid £7.7.0, and later performed it with Mary Platt, John Dixon Tizard and Donald Munro for the Timaru Choral Society.

Anita Ritchie was singled out in a review for her performance of 'From Mighty Kings': 'The liquid quality of her notes and the purity of tone were most

¹¹³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook December 1949-May 1952, 'National Orchestra at Auckland: Conductor's Comment on Programmes', 24 June 1950.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., letter dated 30 May 1950.

noticeable. This singer has a delightful voice'.¹¹⁵ The *Southland News* was fulsome in its praise generally for the performance and of Anita that her 'voice seems more delightful at each hearing. It has the purity and graceful ease'. In July she sang at a reception in honour of Ernest Jenner's election as a Fellow of the Academy of Music to which he penned a note of thanks for 'singing so beautifully'. Further engagements included the part of Mařenka in *The Bartered Bride* with Hubert Milverton-Carta (tenor) and Grey Jamieson (bass) for the Timaru Choral Society.

Anita's paid commissions added to the family's income as did Ritchie's additional duties. The WEA paid him an annual stipend of twenty-five pounds for his conducting role with the Addington Workshops choir, and granted a fee of two pounds ten shillings per lecture for the music appreciation class. Composing also brought in funds with Augener paying him the sum of two guineas for *Under the Greenwood Tree* and an agreement to pay ten per cent of the published price with 'seven copies being counted as six copies in every case', and just half of the agreed amount in the United States of America.¹¹⁶

On 5 December the Ritchie family had increased in number with the birth of their third daughter, Elizabeth, and all income played an important part in contributing to the family's welfare. Even so, the family can recall their mother's cost-saving measures with regards to clothing which were crafted by hand.¹¹⁷ Anita continued to sing following the birth of Elizabeth participating in performances for 3YC radio broadcast in August 1951 and later in that same year with a group of Schubert songs, 'Poems of Schiller'. Demand for Anita as a soloist continued the following year. She performed to Griffiths's accompaniment in a lunchtime recital at Canterbury College which was favourably reviewed – Anita's clarity of tone

¹¹⁵ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1948-1949; 'Musical Union Performance: Judas Maccabaeus Presented, Satisfying Concert at Civic', newspaper cutting [n.d.].

¹¹⁶ Ibid., letter dated 10 August 1950.

¹¹⁷ Elizabeth Lees (née Ritchie), *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 20 February 2008); Jennifer Lee (née Ritchie), *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 25 February 2009). Recordings and transcripts held by the author.

and smooth phrasing were particularly remarked on; she appeared as a soloist for The Royal Christchurch Musical Society's performance of Edward German's *Merrie England*; and she was engaged for various other events such as The Rangiora Musical Society's concert in July.

Canterbury University – Five Years On

By 1952 Ritchie was an established lecturer at Canterbury University College as well as a versatile director, arranger, composer, speaker and reviewer in the wider community. Griffiths was keen to endorse Ritchie's abilities and made a recommendation to the University that Ritchie be promoted to Senior Lecturer expecting that this would be approved in the next round of the university's appointments and promotions. In the second half of the year, Griffiths travelled to England on six months refresher leave and Ritchie was left as Acting Head of Music in his absence. The two corresponded, with Ritchie keeping Griffiths abreast of anything newsworthy in the city and at the university in particular. Griffiths was extremely disappointed to learn that the university was reluctant to elevate Ritchie's position at this time. Whether this was for budgeting or other reasons is not known but Ritchie decided that it was time to look further afield to advance his career. He was young and had experienced success in his academic career as well as composing and other related roles in music. When the University of Western Australia advertised for a Reader in Music for the education faculty, he decided to apply. It was a newly created position and appeared to carry with it the promise of future development and advancement in the role for the successful applicant. With his career prospects at Canterbury seemingly at a standstill, he wrote to Griffiths advising him of his intentions and asked if he would be a referee for his application. While Ritchie was mindful of Griffiths's help with his career to date, he was not hindered in his ambition by their collegial and personal relationship.

While Griffiths appeared to be accepting of Ritchie's stance, he was unhappy at the possibility of his departure from the Music Department for which he blamed

the College's hesitancy in promoting him.¹¹⁸ He supplied a hastily-written testimonial which he sent as a separate air letter and advised Ritchie that he knew of a large number of applicants for the Western Australia position, three of whom including Ritchie, would be viewed particularly favourably. It could be surmised that the successful applicant Frank Callaway, who was at the time employed in Griffiths's previous role as Head of Music at the Dunedin Technical College, was one of the other two referred to. It might also be assumed that Griffiths made his aggrieved feelings known to Canterbury University College's administrative hierarchy although there was scarcely time. In any event his letter to Ritchie was dated 1 November and on 7 November Ritchie received notification of his promotion to Senior Lecturer from 1 February 1953. The position commanded a salary of one thousand pounds per annum which would increase to one thousand two hundred pounds after four annual fifty pound increments. From this time onwards, Ritchie appears to have discarded the notion of moving elsewhere and concentrated his efforts for promotion at Canterbury.

By now the university was struggling to accommodate increased student numbers and corresponding additional staff on its Rolleston Avenue site. The conditions which some staff were required to work under were highlighted in the *Press* in the latter part of 1952 with a photograph of Ritchie under the heading 'Dog-Box Accommodation for Lecturers', the term apparently coined by college council members. Ritchie was pictured working at his desk which was placed in a six foot area between a piano and a wall.¹¹⁹ Government approval had been given for new university premises on the site at Riccarton (later named Ilam) with initial plans underway for a new school of engineering. The expected completion and moving time was between five and seven years but in fact the engineering school moved only partially in 1959 while the School of Music was one of the last to make the shift in 1974. Additionally, not all of the proposed music building came to fruition because by that time there was little left in the way of funding. Music retained a high profile on campus and in the community, yet the school would never

¹¹⁸ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook April 1952-, aerogramme, 2 November 1952.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., newspaper cutting [n.d.].

command the numbers of other faculties and as a consequence, any further development of its facilities remained on the drawing board. The most glaring omission was that of a concert hall which the original design had included. Ritchie's recollection was that the existing building was erected so that the hall could be added in later when monies became available. This never eventuated and Room 205 became the performance space for most campus lunch time and many other recitals.¹²⁰

The year 1952 was typical of this intensely busy time in Ritchie's life. Lecturing, family and social engagements aside, Ritchie spent much of his time attending and participating in an array of concerts and community programmes. Many of his compositions and arrangements were regularly performed and his writing expanded from reviews to articles for publication in journals and newspapers from around 1957. Planning for such a wide range of events whether involved directly as a performer or arranging concerts over a year required discipline, organisational skills and a meticulous eye for detail:¹²¹

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| April 18 – 21 | Addington Workshops Choir Blenheim Tour and Director of the Marlborough Choirs' Festival which included a recital in Picton's Albert Theatre. |
| April | Lunchtime recital 'Sonatas for Violin and Piano with Clifton Cook (violin) and Douglas Zanders (piano). |
| April 22 to July 8 | 12 lectures on Tuesdays: WEA classes 'An Introduction to Music' with Clare Neale. |
| Date unknown | Canterbury College Concert: 'The Alex Lindsay String Orchestra'. |
| Date unknown | Canterbury College Concert: 'Piano Music and Songs' |
| Date unknown | Canterbury College: <i>Belshazzar's Feast</i> recording preceded by a talk by John Ritchie. |

¹²⁰ This was to be situated out over the Ilam School of Music building carpark.

¹²¹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook April 1952-.

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| April 26 | Lecturer at Waimate one day music school by the Adult Education Department, Canterbury University College. |
| May 6 | Christchurch Liederkränzchen, First Subscription Concert. |
| July 12 | Music Department 'Recital of Modern British Song by Hubert Milverton-Carta, accompanist Elizabeth Page' which included Ritchie's <i>Under the Greenwood Tree</i> . |
| July | Mairehau Women's Institute Choir concert; JAR arrangements <i>My Johnnie was a Shoemaker</i> and <i>A Farmer's Son So Sweet</i> with choral work <i>The Lamb</i> . |
| August 19 | Christchurch Liederkränzchen, Second Subscription Concert. |
| August 25-31 | Week long Music School in Dunedin with tutors Frank Callaway, Theo. Staples (Dunedin Technical College), Alan Meldrum and George Perry from Dunedin. Other contributors throughout the week included Victor Galway and Mary Martin from the University of Otago together with the University Trio comprising Gladys Vincent, Francis Bate and Maurice Till, George Wilkinson who was the Lecturer at the Dunedin Training College and the organist at St Paul's Cathedral, Charles Collins. |
| September 20 | N.Z. Composers' Festival. |
| October 30 | A Community Choirs Festival – included the Addington Workshops Male Voice Choir. |
| November | "What's in a Song?" Lecture – Recital with Anita and John Ritchie including two Ritchie songs <i>The Lamb</i> and <i>Three Housman Lyrics</i> at the Adult Education Department, Canterbury University College. |
| December 9 | Christchurch Liederkränzchen, Third Subscription Concert. |
| Concert reviews | The National Orchestra's midday recital at the Civic Theatre, Christchurch with Michael Bowles; the Cathedral Choir's performance of St Mark Passion under the direction of organist C. Foster Browne; the Chamber Music Society's recital of violin and piano sonatas and sonatinas in the |

Canterbury College Hall performed by Ruth Pearl and Frederick Page; The Alex Lindsay String Orchestra's recital at College Hall; *The Seasons* performed by the Harmonic Society; a French Chamber music recital by Lesley Anderson and William Trussell; the Fifth Subscription Concert by the National Orchestra with conductor Michael Bowles; *The Nativity* Methodist Choirs' performance; a piano recital of sonatas by Haydn and Beethoven with pianist Henry Campbell; Handel's *Messiah* with the 3YA Orchestra and the Harmonic Society;

Book Reviews *The Nibelung's Ring*, a handbook to Wagner's opera cycle by Aylmer Buesst; *Austrian Concerto* by Goerge Borodi; *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* by Thomas Morley, edited by R. Alec Harman; *Talking of Singing* by Thomas Wood.

Ritchie was also in demand as an adjudicator in the community both locally and further afield. In early 1955, the Southland Competitions Society wrote to Ritchie requesting his presence as Senior Vocal Judge for the Centennial Year Competitions in August 1956: 'Members spoke very highly of your judging ability and you are the first choice for the position', wrote Harry Gilbertson.¹²² Ritchie was also tasked with selecting the test pieces and he was particularly keen to include Griffiths's *And Shall Trelawny Die* for the tenors but there was initially some difficulty in having enough copies for supply in music dealers Begg's Invercargill store. He wrote to Begg's for their help in ensuring the song would be available in time for entrants: 'I think one New Zealand composer must be represented in cases like this'. As it happened, only the bass test piece, Handel's *Oh Ruddier Than The Cherry*, had to be changed due to short supply while Griffiths's song was included.

¹²² Ritchie papers, Letters folder, letter dated 15 February 1955.

In 1956 Ritchie also accepted an offer made by the New Zealand Broadcasting Service Station 3ZB to be one of the Provincial Judges along with Victor C. Peters and a Mr Hunter for the inaugural Mobil Oil Vocal Championship.¹²³ Although much of Ritchie's recorded musical life relates to composing and performing in the early part of his career, his primary role of lecturer at the university, though less documented and intangible, was highly significant. Many students who studied music at Canterbury during Ritchie's term went on to have successful careers. While a single lecturer's contribution to an individual's success is difficult to quantify since it can be due to a variety of factors and influences, several past student participants relayed similar stories when they talked about Ritchie as a lecturer: that of an excellent teacher who was very well-organised, knowledgeable, skilled, and encouraging of students' efforts.

Cameo – William (Bill) Hawkey

William (Bill) Hawkey (1932-2019) was born in Timaru, the eldest of three children. He began music lessons with his father, an amateur pianist, when he was eight years old, progressing to private lessons with a local teacher within a year or two. In 1943 his father, who worked for Timaru booksellers P.W. Hutton, accepted an offer as manager of the book purchasing branch of Whitcomb and Tombs in Invercargill. The family settled in New Zealand's southernmost city with Hawkey senior enjoying his rise in both status and pay; however Hawkey found the move during his last year at primary school very difficult. Whilst one might expect that the school curriculum would be identical across the breadth of New Zealand, this was not the case. Both the textbooks and the Southland approach at Invercargill were completely different to his school experience at Timaru and he floundered academically in the new environment. Matters were made worse when his father discovered that he was occupying the job of a serviceman who was away at war. Hawkey senior, who, as a haemophiliac, had been deemed unsuitable for the armed services, did the honourable thing and relinquished the position on the serviceman's return in 1945. The family returned to Timaru where his parents bought a grocer's business and Hawkey, who had just

¹²³ Later termed the Mobil Song Quest, now the Lexus Song Quest.

completed his first year at high school, struggled once more to adapt to the change and vastly different syllabus, cementing his self-belief of an intellectual capacity that was well below par.

Alongside Hawkey's perceived academic failings, however, which included repeating his fifth form year (equivalent to year eleven today), was a growing skill and confidence in his musical abilities. He thrived under the guidance of good teachers in piano and theory both in Invercargill and Timaru. In his sixteenth year, on the recommendation of his teacher, he began instruction from Ernest Empson, travelling by train to and from Christchurch regularly for lessons. By this time he had achieved his Associate Trinity College London (ATCL) and soon after his Licentiate (LTCL) on piano. Hawkey was also proficient on the pipe organ and he was organist for the Bank Street Methodist Church, as well as having acquired some conducting and composing skills. He thoroughly enjoyed his time with Empson whom he described as a wonderful teacher. Having begun work at his father's grocery store without completing his schooling, there was no question of Hawkey studying at university although he continued to flourish musically under the guidance of Empson.

He arrived at the usual time for his lesson one day aged around nineteen years of age to be told that he would not be having piano tuition; rather an appointment had been made for him to talk to Vernon Griffiths at the university. Hawkey showed some reticence at this change of plan, believing that there was very little point in discussing a study option which clearly he was unable to take but Empson was adamant and the meeting took place as planned. Hawkey's recollection of Griffiths was of a very old and venerable man who asked many questions relating to Hawkey's musical achievements. Hawkey became very caught up in Griffiths's enthusiasm and returned home to discuss what he had learned. Whilst he was not able to enrol in the same way as a matriculated high school leaver, it was possible to gain provisional admission at the age of twenty-one and be granted matriculation once one course had been satisfactorily completed.

Still dogged by his sense of intellectual inferiority, with his parents' blessing, Hawkey began studies as a cultural student the following year. He attended the music classes and completed all of the course requirements which were subsequently marked but not recorded. The experience opened up a world of music which was stimulating and exhilarating. The following year he enrolled in a Bachelor of Music as an extra-mural student, achieving top marks in several of the papers and scooping a number of prizes. He completed thirteen of the fourteen required papers in three years, one less than usual but stumbled with the one non-music paper, a requirement of the degree. Misreading the notes for the English paper he had taken since 'everybody does English', and subsequently failing, he changed tack the following year. He not only passed but thoroughly enjoyed Education I instead. Hawkey found university life to be of exceptional community spirit and enthusiasm for musical activities whether lectures, class discussions, or group performances. He remembered the acoustics paper as being the bane of many a music student's studies including his own and his envy for another student's photographic memory who achieved an A grade after a read through of the text book the night before the exam. Hawkey on the other hand made repeated attempts to understand the mathematical concepts of Wood's *The Physics of Music* and was rewarded with a bare C pass for his efforts. Hawkey had the sneaking suspicion that even this mark may well have been the result of Griffiths's plea to the lecturer during a staff discussion, paraphrased thus: 'Walter, Walter, you have to pass Mr Hawkey because he is one of our best students', a disclosure Griffiths made to Hawkey a year or two later.

Keyboard and Aural Skills had only just been introduced at Canterbury, with Griff teaching the former while Ritchie took the aural class.¹²⁴ The keyboard paper especially was of enormous benefit to Hawkey as he accumulated skills in reading and performing various clefs, figured harmony, full orchestral scores, and transpositions. The class took place around a piano in the cramped surroundings of Griffiths's office and Hawkey recalls Griff's rather paternal attitude to some of the students, in particular a 'wispy thin' lovely girl called Helen Cameron, who

¹²⁴ Vernon Griffiths was affectionately known by many close to him as Griff.

always seemed to go from one cold to another. ‘Helen’, Griff said one day as she sat there in obvious discomfort and sniffing from yet another cold, ‘you worry me; have you got your singlet on?’. Hawkey said that you could never take offence to anything Griff said as it was just his way of showing genuine concern for his charges.

There were only around thirty-five to forty enrolled music students at the time so they all knew each other and assisted one another in their musical ambitions. Hawkey assumed the directorship of a madrigal group which Peter Zwartz had founded but had relinquished when he left New Zealand to study percussion overseas. Hawkey also became accompanist for the Harmonic Society at the same time, a position he filled for five to six years before taking over as conductor which he continued with for the next fourteen years. He formed a piano trio with local cellist Ellen Doyle and violinist Shirley Salmond which aided all in their performance skills. The group performed at old people’s homes as the retirement homes were referred to then without any expectation of monetary reward. Sometimes they were given a pot of jam or a lace handkerchief as a token of thanks, emulating the ethos of community service which Griffiths and later Ritchie modelled.

Ritchie’s lessons were always very well planned with each progressing systematically to the next. This was in contrast to some lecturers Hawkey experienced who were obviously knowledgeable but had not done the groundwork to ensure the subject was covered in a logical sequence. Students knew they could rely on Ritchie’s class material and although there was not much room for spontaneity, some discussion was encouraged and enjoyed. Chatter amongst students while Ritchie was teaching, however, was severely and perhaps rightfully frowned on. Hawkey recalled sitting with fellow student pianist, Margaret Nielsen, during class as they chatted excitedly to each other about various musical topics; the subject under study, composers and their works, or maybe the two-piano pieces they were working on together, and recalled the moment when Ritchie stopped the lecture one day. He glared at Hawkey and Nielsen who had been talking incessantly and rebuked them soundly with ‘Please be quiet!’ Hawkey

wanted the earth to swallow him up but understood Ritchie's frustration. Ritchie was also known to socialise with some of the students after Saturday morning classes and with the Addington Workshops Choir members after their rehearsals. Hawkey, a teetotaler at the time, seldom participated in these sessions during his student years, enjoying only the occasional sarsaparilla when pressed to join them. He observed Ritchie's demeanour and was of the view that the respect that Ritchie commanded as teacher and director was not compromised by these get-togethers. Ritchie enjoyed informal interaction with his students and choir members and could identify with them as fellow human beings who shared a love of music whilst maintaining a detachment as their educator.

Hawkey married Ruth Hosking as he was completing his music degree in 1956. Rather fortuitously his brother-in-law, who was head of the music programme at St Andrews College, answered a call to the Methodist Ministry and recommended to the Rector, Les Stewart that Hawkey would be ideal for the job he was vacating. Hawkey was successful in his application and for the following six years thoroughly enjoyed his role at the college, setting up a tradition of taking the Upper Sixth Boys to the University Hall to attend the music department's lunchtime weekly concerts every Thursday at 1.00 p.m.¹²⁵ Years later, Hawkey who then lived in Australia, came to understand the far reaching influence of such events on people's lives when he received a phone call from a past student of the school, inviting Hawkey to be guest of honour at an Old Boys Reunion which the student was holding at his home in Sydney. The student, now a judge in the judicial system had sung in the St Andrews Chapel choir for a time and although not particularly musical, had retained the memory of the university recitals from which a personal musical appreciation had sprung.

In 1962 when John Ritchie took over as Head of Music at the University of Canterbury and Michael Toovey was appointed senior lecturer, Hawkey successfully applied for the advertised lecturer's position. At that time the School of Music's main office was lodged in a small single storey house in Cashel Street,

¹²⁵ Upper sixth was later known as the seventh form, now year thirteen.

two blocks away from the main university grounds. Both Ritchie and Toovey were incredibly helpful to Hawkey in his first lecturing role and he recalled that Ritchie ensured Hawkey was given subjects to teach which would suit his range of knowledge. These included Counterpoint and Fugue which he particularly loved; his experience as an organist also stood him in good stead for the topic. Ian Dando, who became a noted educator and music critic, was one of Hawkey's music students at the time and was most appreciative of Hawkey's expertise in this area. He commented to him one day: 'Oh Bill, I am so grateful to you; I got an A plus in Theory'.

Sadly, the department was to lose a much loved and respected colleague and teacher in Michael Toovey when he died suddenly just three years later in 1965. Toovey's passing was a blow to Ritchie who not only lost a member of staff but a close friend and sporting aficionado. From his early years on the golf course and attending sporting matches with his father, Ritchie had been both enthusiastic player and spectator, maintaining above average scores in golf while playing regularly. In the late 1950s he found a fellow-enthusiast in music lecturer Michael Toovey and the two of them often put in an early round before classes began in the morning. Ritchie's perseverance paid off when he achieved an albatross at the Waitikiri golf course, an event he defined as one of his greatest successes in life.

Following Toovey's death, Ritchie's organisational skills came to the fore as he rearranged his own schedule to cover most of Toovey's classes. The staff's sense of personal loss was considerable and Hawkey conveyed to Ritchie that a planned trip with the Harmonic Society as invited guests to represent New Zealand at the Commonwealth Games Festival should be cancelled out of respect for Toovey's passing. Ritchie was adamant that Hawkey and the Singers should go and that the importance of the trip to the university outweighed any other consideration. The group went and Hawkey composed a special work for the occasion entitled *Avon*. The piece was performed several times during their visit and favourably commented on by *The Guardian* newspaper critic, noting that it was reminiscent of many of Britten's choral works. It was subsequently published by Novello and used as a supplement in one of their monthly journals.

Hawkey's opinion of Ritchie's composing during the time of their close association at Canterbury was that, like Bach, he wrote in response to events around him and perhaps only occasionally because the urge took him. For example, the new resident quartet or a visiting ensemble would inspire Ritchie to compose a work for them to perform, and the work would reflect that particular group's traits and strengths. Hawkey believed that Ritchie's compositions generally mirrored two influences: British and Hungarian. The latter, Hawkey believed, was what gave Ritchie's compositions an originality of style when compared, for instance, with Griffiths's music, notwithstanding that Hawkey believed Ritchie was greatly influenced by Griffiths's philosophy of music for the masses. Hawkey commented that Griffiths was highly regarded as a composer in his day and his works were performed regularly in Canterbury while today those pieces are seldom heard. Hawkey considered Ritchie's *Clarinet Concertino* an excellent piece and the first of his major works. He did not, however, view Ritchie primarily as a composer. He may have been much more adventurous than Griffiths but his music was not avant-garde to be wondered about or disliked for its difference. On the other hand neither was it music to be discarded and of no consequence: 'I think John's [music] will always be there to be used'.

As a teacher none could compare with Ritchie's lesson structure, delivery of lectures and his clarity. His written feedback on assignments and tests was explicit and the corresponding marks reflected any criticism and comments: 'It was meticulous [...]. [T]here was always a reason why you scored well or you didn't score well [...]. He certainly outshone all the other staff by miles'. Hawkey also observed the respect which was bestowed on Ritchie as he worked to develop international relationships at the university and the musical community through his connections and friendships including his involvement with the International Society of Music Education (ISME). His expertise in administration was well known and he was excellent at organising although Hawkey was not able to envisage Ritchie's interest in this area being maintained at the expense of his other musical activities.

One of the best all round musicians at the time, Hawkey believed that of the myriad of his musical skills, Ritchie's conducting was of such particular strength that it might have been possible for him to have made a career solely as a conductor if he had so wished. Ritchie may have been an excellent administrator but Hawkey believed his staff appointments often contained a degree of risk, his own included: 'John was generous in trying to give people a chance'. For the most part this may have worked out well but Hawkey thought that Ritchie might have questioned some of those decisions later. Traditionalists Maurice Till and David Sell were two staff whom Hawkey recalled Ritchie had difficulties with, whereas 'some of those who might look to be the wraiths of the afterlife, people like John Cousins' proved to be very easy to get on with.

Hawkey remained on the staff until the end of 1976 when he left Canterbury to take up a newly created position as Head of the School of Performing Arts in Adelaide. He had previously spent two periods of fourteen weeks and six months respectively in Adelaide as invited guest conductor by the Australian Broadcasting Commission for the Adelaide Singers, and it was likely through this musical association that he was approached and invited to apply for the role. Within three years he had achieved what he had set out to do in establishing the courses for the new institution and was ready to return to a solely music based position. This time a chance purchase of a Saturday paper was the catalyst for change when he spotted a newly placed advertisement for a position at the Canberra School of Music assisting the foundation director and violinist Ernest Llewellyn. Hawkey immediately applied and was appointed Deputy to Llewellyn at the school where he remained for twenty years, the last three as Professor and Director of Music.

Hawkey has been recognised in both his birth and adopted country for services to music. He received an Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1976 from New Zealand and more recently a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2014.¹²⁶ In

¹²⁶ This was awarded five years after the author interviewed William Hawkey.

acknowledging the circumstances which provided the starting point for his musical life he said:

There's no doubt about it that the Canterbury experience was the launching pad for everything that really subsequently mattered as far as my career went [...]. The bottom line out of all this from a personal point of view is in a way that has a lot to do with Ritchie; that for a high school dropout to end up as Emeritus Professor of the ANU is an extraordinary career but it could not have happened without him as the catalyst. The fate game played a lot at certain points but John Ritchie was the catalyst.¹²⁷

Cameo – Margaret Nielsen

In early February 1957 during the final stages of Refresher Leave in the States, Ritchie arrived in Oakland, California to stay a few days with relatives of Margaret Nielsen, an aunt, Mrs Ruth Brown, and her daughter and son-in-law, Olive and Fred Dickson. Ruth had grown up in New Zealand and Ritchie enjoyed listening to her as she chatted about her and Nielsen's early life in New Zealand. At the time, Nielsen was in the process of completing her exercise, the compositional element of a Bachelor of Music at the University of Canterbury. Letters exchanged between Anita and Ritchie during this time indicate a close relationship between Nielsen and the Ritchie family and he learned from Anita that Margaret had recently been unsuccessful in her application for a position at Otago University.¹²⁸ Ritchie thought that she should be appointed to the staff at Canterbury but instead Griffiths encouraged Nielsen to pursue a school teaching career, an option she found as unpalatable as Ritchie had done ten years earlier. Nielsen's excellent results however meant that she was awarded a bursary and she began looking overseas for a suitable place to study. Once more, she had to withstand Griffiths's well-intentioned advice who considered an English university the only option. Fortunately, a different view was provided by Ritchie on his return from the States, a pivotal point in Nielsen's training and career.

¹²⁷ William Hawkey, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 1 July 2009), pp. 34-35, 44.
Recording and transcript held by the author.

¹²⁸ Ritchie papers, Personal Letters folder, letter from Anita to Ritchie, 27 November 1956.

Margaret Nielsen grew up in Hawera, a small North Island town, with her father and paternal widowed aunt who lived with them after her mother died when Nielsen was just two years old. Music permeated from both sides of the family; Nielsen's maternal uncle, Walter Fennell, who died in England just before Nielsen was born, was an early and possibly the first recipient of an overseas music scholarship to study piano and singing, and her mother taught piano. For Nielsen there was always a piano at home and the resident aunt and a second paternal aunt, Ruth, were both harpists; thus music was always present around her.¹²⁹

Amateur music of various types was also found in the town; an accomplished brass band, a small, less proficient orchestra and a number of choirs. Nielsen was brought up Catholic in keeping with her mother's faith, and although she abandoned the church in her teens following a series of unresolved matters, the church's music such as the Gregorian chant which Nielsen enjoyed from an early age, remained an enduring influence. Nielsen was drawn to the piano and played by ear as a very young child before beginning lessons at the age of five when she started school. She was taught by Constance Riley who was primarily a singing teacher, but who had taken over her late sister's piano students after she passed away. Constance continued to teach both voice and piano but was mindful of her limitations as a piano teacher. She was adamant that her students should be given the best technical advice for the instrument and so elicited help from those more experienced such as visiting examiners to whom Nielsen recalls playing.

Nielsen learnt the violin at school attaining a level which enabled her to play in the local orchestra and was also taught the organ from the local Anglican vicar at his church. These lessons caused friction between Nielsen and the Catholic Church and matters were brought to a head when permission had to be sought from the church in order for Nielsen to be the accompanist for the school's special Sunday service. This was an annual event held at one of the Hawera churches of which there were varying denominations. For this particular year, the service was to be held at the Anglican Church. Nielsen had been the school's pianist for two

¹²⁹ Margaret Nielsen, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Wellington: 15 September 2009). Recording and transcript held by the author.

years without issue and was looking forward to playing the wonderful instrument which the church housed. The Catholic parish priest took issue with her request and refused to grant her permission to perform there. This was the final straw for Nielsen who, at the age of fifteen, left Catholicism for good.

Singing also featured at the high school. The school embraced Vernon Griffiths's style of music teaching and the *Dominion Songbooks* were the main source of material for students' learning and performance; Nielsen recalled the books' bass tunes and three female part songs in particular. Because they showed singular keenness and musical talent, Nielsen and a fellow school violinist were given permission to found their own small special choir which practised and performed throughout the year. The Headmaster was eager to showcase the school's students' musical abilities and invited Griffiths to the end of year concert in 1950, an event which both he and Ritchie attended.

This was, in fact, the second time Nielsen and Ritchie's paths had crossed. Six months earlier in May of her final school year, Nielsen had attended the music school at Whanganui run by the Victoria University's Adult Education Department. Nielsen recalled that Griffiths and Ritchie were instructors along with Ralph Lilly from Nelson, and Theo Staples and Frank Callaway from Dunedin. The music school aroused Nielsen's interest in study at Canterbury although full time university was not deemed possible. There were two main reasons for this; she had no means to do so and, rather like Timaru born Bill Hawkey, she had an inherent belief that you didn't venture past the small town's gates: 'you know, people from Hawera really didn't go to university'.

Instead, Nielsen decided to attend training college in Christchurch which provided an allowance or studentship while studying. Nielsen also enrolled in two music papers, Music I and Counterpoint I, during her first college year. The former which encompassed two parts, Music History and Harmony, was taught by Griffiths and Ritchie respectively while Peach taught counterpoint. Nielsen, along with most of her fellow students, found counterpoint the most difficult of these but they all managed to scrape through: 'we all, I think, got fifty or something'.

By the following year Nielsen was fully engaged with the demands of teacher training and her university education ceased temporarily. Notwithstanding, music was a major part of her life at Canterbury both as her specialist teaching subject at the college, and in her wider circle.

She recalled that she practised on the better piano in one of the rooms at the college and the music teacher, Ernest Jenner, also an accomplished pianist, was stationed nearby. He would come ‘racing up the corridor with a pencil and [...] start drawing arrows; this leads here and this leads to here’. Nielsen would acknowledge Jenner’s assistance in the moment but would later erase any markings from the music before she attended her lesson with Ernest Empson. While she appreciated Jenner’s enthusiasm and encouragement, especially on the matter of connecting upbeats to down-beats, an aspect of music which helped her later when she went to California, it was definitely not the done thing to receive instruction from a second teacher. Nielsen was staying with the Empsons at this time, attending Ernest Empson’s Eroica Club recitals. These provided the opportunity for her to gain confidence and performance experience in relatively informal surroundings. Soon she was performing at the club’s well-attended biennial public concerts which featured many local musicians including singers Winston Sharp and Anita Ritchie.

Nielsen completed her second year of teacher training at Canterbury before returning to Hawera to fulfil the required one-year probationary teaching where she taught music, comprised mainly of singing at the high school. Her aunt suffered ill health during that year and passed away, bequeathing a modest sum of money to Nielsen. This provided her with the means of supporting herself and she resumed her music studies at the University of Canterbury full time the following year. For the remainder of Nielsen’s degree, she was taught mostly by Ritchie although there was also the compulsory acoustics paper which was given by physics lecturer Walther Roth. This particular paper was quite challenging, not least because Roth’s German accent made it very difficult for Nielsen to differentiate between the words notes and notes.

The music classes were a mix of recent school leavers and older mature students. Some of these adult students were those being given a second chance at education after having served in the Second World War at a time when they would have customarily been forging a career in their chosen field. It was during this period 1954 to 1957 that Nielsen engaged with several musical figures including Peter and Jenny Zwartz who together with Nielsen were founding members of the University Madrigal Group. The Singers enjoyed their time together immensely, rehearsing and giving concerts around Canterbury as well as radio broadcasts. Nielsen also became well-acquainted with the entire Ritchie family and together enjoyed social gatherings, babysitting the children, and performing with Anita for a number of recitals including the execution of the first radio broadcast of the then newly published Samuel Barber songs. These songs and those of Fauré which were introduced to Nielsen by William Trussel, a sort of disciple of Ernest Jenner, cemented Nielsen's love of the repertoire and her interest as an accompanist for singers. She also spent time in the company of fellow-student pianist and organist William Hawkey, performing two-piano work with him. Hawkey too was a pupil of Empson and with two pianos at their disposal the pair learned and performed some of the repertoire to both live audiences and for radio programmes. Ritchie's conductorship and listening skills were invaluable, providing them with advice on ensemble, balance and dynamics. Works performed included Rachmaninov's *Suite for Two Pianos* as well as Ritchie's own *Intrada and Tarantelle* for four hands.

Nielsen enjoyed her time at Canterbury interacting with like-minded musicians, while her studies and performing activities kept her fully occupied. Aside from Ritchie's piano duet, she became familiar with both Griffiths's and Ritchie's works especially their songs, a number of which were performed by Anita. Nielsen was particularly taken with Ritchie's *Lord, When the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace*, which was premiered by the Madrigal Singers and much enjoyed by

singers and audience alike: ‘the suspensions of the opening [...] very sincere and [...] beautifully balanced voices and shaped’.¹³⁰

Both Griffiths and Ritchie were encouraging and supportive of her and while Ritchie was her chief teacher, Griffiths and Nielsen were involved in many of the same recitals. Nielsen found Ritchie to be an excellent lecturer; very clear, well prepared and systematic. He was generous with his knowledge and time, helping those who were genuinely struggling although he did not suffer foolishness. He was a meticulous marker and provided very good feedback on assessments, giving specimen answers and workings to illustrate as necessary. One of Ritchie’s greatest strengths was that he was a practitioner and this was apparent in the way that he taught and in the language that he used. Griffiths had a keen interest in improvisation which he introduced during his keyboard classes, a skill which Nielsen too became adept in. Both Griffiths and Nielsen accompanied Anita Ritchie and other vocalists at various times and they also performed a number of four-hand works together. Griffiths particularly liked one of these pieces, *Tarantella for Four Hands at One Piano* composed by York Bowen but was less enthused with Poulenc’s *Sonata for Piano Four Hands*, a work which Nielsen introduced him to. Performing this particular duet with Griffiths provided its own non-musical challenges:

He used to play the bass and I played the top, and in the final movement of it, the person at primo has to suddenly dive down to the end of the piano and play some bass notes. Well now Griff had a very large tummy – a very, very large one – and he smoked a pipe almost non-stop [...] so you kind of had to circumnavigate firstly the stomach and secondly the pipe and the hot ash that was pouring out [...]. It was a wing and a prayer sort of thing but [...] a lot of fun.

Griffiths was fairly conservative, in Nielsen’s view, and accordingly music performed and course texts used at Canterbury reflected this. Ritchie taught

¹³⁰ Ritchie papers, Ritchie Composition book, Ritchie has noted: ‘*Lord, when the sense of thy sweet grace* written for Peter Zwartz and the Madrigal Singers’, p.13.

harmony from the Lovelock books which were clear and concise but, perhaps like R.O. Morris which Nielsen was introduced to later in 1959 or 1960 when she was employed at the University of Victoria, were old fashioned in language and content. While the Morris books were soon discarded in favour of a more contemporary approach, Canterbury was slower to adapt to modern techniques. Of Griffiths, she stated: 'his idea of contemporary music was Parry and Stanford'. John Ireland, one-time pupil of Stanford, too was highly thought of at Canterbury, so much so that the university hosted a festival in his name in the 1950s in which several recitals of his works took place including a performance of songs which Anita Ritchie participated in. Nielsen liked much of Ireland's music, especially the songs; however as a composer, he could not have been described as avant-garde. She was aware of the hierarchy of the department staff but did not concern herself with it beyond her own needs as a student. With her own experiences in the academic world to draw on and the luxury of retrospection later in life, she was able to view Canterbury's department in a different light. Griffiths was the king-pin and those under him, principally Ritchie, had to know their place.

Notwithstanding, Griffiths appeared to be quite disorganised in his administrative duties and he relied heavily on Ritchie who quietly went about using his exceptional organisational skills to ensure the smooth running of the department. Additionally, while Griffiths held traditional views on music, Nielsen found him to be very supportive of her in her student years. She admired his abilities as an organist and pianist and there was no questioning his commitment to the development of music in the community through group playing and singing. He engendered the enjoyment of music in many who would otherwise not have experienced it, both in a listening and practical capacity.

Over time during the period Nielsen was studying at Canterbury, certain routines emerged. Saturday mornings began with Roth's taxing acoustics class. This was followed by orchestra practice under Ritchie's direction in which Nielsen played the double bass 'very badly but at least I could play'. After orchestra rehearsal, a group of the students and Ritchie would set off to the Carlton Gardens for drinks and lively conversation. Social interaction of this kind between students and staff

was not unusual and Nielsen well remembers the time when they had arranged to meet Ritchie at a hotel, this time the upmarket Clarendon, after they had sat their final Harmony paper. Ritchie cheerfully wished them well, secure in the knowledge that the paper he had set held no surprises and would be manageable for all if not enjoyable. Such was his confidence in their ability to complete the paper with ease well before time that he arrived at the pub early in anticipation, telling them prior: ‘look I’ll be in the Clarendon. I’ll get there a bit earlier and then you just come when you’re ready’, Nielsen recalled.

The candidates all worked feverishly to the end of exam time yet no one was able to complete the paper. It seemed that there may have only been one way to harmonise the exercise and adhere to all the rules, and the students spent the entire time trying to achieve this. They arrived at the bar after a silent drive in student George O’Gorman’s old car stony faced and furious to face a grinning Ritchie who was lounging back in his seat, beer in hand. His countenance quickly changed when he saw his students’ expressions, absolutely astonished at the difficulty they had encountered. When he realised that even his star student, Margaret, was of the same mind as the entire class, Ritchie had to concede that something had gone terribly wrong. He hastened to buy a round of drinks for them and the atmosphere eventually thawed as Ritchie assured the group that the paper would be marked, taking into account its unplanned challenges.

Becoming a bass player had been a happy accident. In fact Nielsen had very much wanted to play the violin and began lessons in Christchurch with Harry Ellwood of The Ellwood Trio fame. One particular wintery morning, heeding local radio warnings for cyclists to take extra care due to fog and frost, Nielsen decided to leave her bicycle at the student hostel where she resided and instead set off on foot. She had gone only a very short distance when she slid on a large patch of ice and fell, breaking her left wrist. Unfortunately once the bone was set, Nielsen was unable to place her hand in the correct position for violin playing and she ceased her lessons shortly afterwards. Thankfully, piano performance was unaffected. This accident, combined with a number of features – an instrument was available, the orchestra needed a player, Nielsen was keen to participate, and Ritchie, who

was a proficient player from his high school days, could provide tuition – meant that Nielsen became a double bass player for the university orchestra.

The instrument was very large for her small frame so she had to use her entire hand to go up and down the fingerboard to play the notes. Although self-critical of her ability in terms of tone: ‘I knew I wasn’t out of tune but [...] god help the sound! [...] a kind of groan of something an octave below the cellos’, Nielsen loved playing the instrument and looked forward immensely to that one solo note which completed the harmony or foretold what was to come. Additionally, she discovered that being an orchestral member was an invaluable experience as a pianist and accompanist. She developed expertise in listening to others and observing the conductor, vital skills which helped her throughout her performing life. Nielsen was especially delighted when Ritchie asked her to perform as pianist with the orchestra in 1957; she played the first movement of Robert Schumann’s piano concerto and Walter Leigh’s *Concertino for Harpsichord*.

It was apparent to Nielsen on Ritchie’s return from the States in 1957 that the visit had opened his eyes, and ears, to new music and innovative ideas. According to Nielsen ‘he realised Canterbury was hopelessly behind in trying to bring people into the world of the 1950s where [...] Stockhausen was starting up’. Anticipating Griffiths’s disapproval or rebuttal of new ideas, he did not openly promote this music or offer new techniques to his students for consideration during classes. Instead, soon after Ritchie arrived back at Canterbury, he quietly set about introducing William Schuman’s ‘Materials of Music’ course ideas he had learned at Juilliard to a small group of students comprising William Hawkey and Nielsen along with one or two others. Nielsen, who had never heard of twelve-tone music found the sessions illuminating.

To ensure Griffiths did not discover that the classes were taking place, Ritchie arranged for them to be held outside any timetabled classes or likely concert times, and volunteered his own time. Credits were not awarded; it was simply a way for Ritchie to inform students of the current compositional styles and to study the techniques. It was during the early sessions in which Ritchie had presented

Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales* for analysis that it struck Nielsen that it was likely Ritchie's composing had been negatively impacted by his relationship with Griffiths. It was apparent that Ritchie owed an enormous amount to Griffiths but perhaps a barrier had been created by each of the men's attitude towards the other; with a freer rein and encouragement to pursue his own style, and without a sense of being beholden, Nielsen believed that Ritchie may have gone in quite a different direction composition-wise.

It was only during the interview process that Nielsen began pondering further on Ritchie's music and delved further into his output. She looked at entries in John Thomson's *Biographical Dictionary of New Zealand Composers* and Philip Norman's *Bibliography of New Zealand Compositions* and realised that she had heard only a small sample of Ritchie's works in the intervening years. She was most familiar with his songs and choral music for which Ritchie's attention to the purpose and meaning of text was to be much admired. In all of his music, he showed concern that his music was playable, and his instructions were clear but not excessive. This allowed performers the freedom to unearth and express in their particular way the articulations, nuances and colourings in the music. Nielsen also listened to the C.D. *Aquarius* in order to provide her impressions and reactions to the music:

Overall I was struck by the underlying energy, lyricism, lively and clear part writing, the disciplined control of motives and larger gestures, and development of them. The music is inventive, has much rhythmic interest and flexibility, sonorities are rich and balanced with effective textural contrasts and voicing, and events are well paced within a really disciplined and well-structured architectural framework. He knows his instruments and their potential, and uses their colours to fully engage the ears of the listener. I appreciate the many thematic contrasts expressing an open joyousness, humour, tenderness and warmth, all receiving well-placed support, harmonic and contrapuntal.

Nielsen completed a four-year Bachelor of Music graduating with first class honours in 1957, becoming the first Canterbury College student to do so. She was subsequently awarded a government bursary for overseas study. Ritchie was

instrumental in her choice of tertiary institution, guiding her to apply to the more modern Mills College in California than the traditional Birmingham University which Griffiths encouraged her to attend. She included a tape recording of both her piano playing and some composition in her application and was duly accepted for a two-year Master's degree with the college also waiving any tuition fees. Although Nielsen knew that her strength was in performance and not composition 'realising that I had nothing to say', study in composition provided her with invaluable insight as a performer: 'to have basic knowledge of compositional techniques [...] and analysis [...] has helped a lot'.¹³¹

Nielsen studied composition under Leon Kirchner during her first year, a well-regarded American composer whom Nielsen considered a very good teacher; organised and systematic. Darius Milhaud, who alternated on an annual basis between the Paris Conservatoire and Mills College, was her second-year lecturer. Whilst Milhaud covered some basic groundwork and listened and provided feedback to the students' efforts, it was apparent that he was really much more interested in his own prolific writing than teaching. Notwithstanding, the overall experience of being exposed to a broad range of new and 'way-out' music, arguably of varying quality, was both invaluable and life-changing for Nielsen and her career.

Nielsen returned to New Zealand in 1959 briefly staying with Maisie Kilkelly who had a flat in Cashel Street next door to the Music Department's house in Christchurch before heading north. She was without job prospects or means, but musical contacts, in this case believed to be Peter Zwartz, ensured she was in Hawera for barely a week before she received a phone call with an offer of work. Fortuitously, the visiting pianist for the New Zealand Opera Company and orchestra who were touring the *Barber of Seville* had decided to return to England leaving a vacancy which Nielsen was happy to fill. Nielsen thoroughly enjoyed the experience of travelling around the North Island towns and cities and meeting a variety of people while being billeted. The production itself was very good and

¹³¹ Nielsen, *Interview*, interview transcript, p. 6.

contained an excellent cast, a number of whom went on to have successful performance careers including Noel Mangin, Mary O'Brien, Lynne Cantlon and Jon Andrew.

The company was at their base in Wellington at the end of the year when Nielsen decided to make contact with Frederick Page who was by this time Professor of music at Victoria University.¹³² Nielsen had met Page in Christchurch during one of his recitals when she assisted as page turner and was invited by him to get in touch when she came to Wellington. Page had recently visited the Darmstadt Festival of Contemporary Music and Nielsen's experience at Mills College with its emphasis on modern techniques in music ensured a mutual understanding and appreciation of current trends: 'I knew a bit more than perhaps a lot of other people might have at that time [...] and Fred just welcomed me like a member of the family'. Nielsen's first meeting with Douglas Lilburn was also one of shared beliefs and respect for each other's work. Nielsen had written to Lilburn from America asking if he could send her some of his piano music which she subsequently performed at the Californian chapter of the International Society of Contemporary Music (ISCM).

During Nielsen's meeting with Page, he mentioned that the music department would be advertising for a Junior Lecturer in January the following year (1960) and suggested that she apply for the position. She succeeded in being offered the position, beating Edward (Ted) Carr in the process something which 'he was very cross' about. According to Nielsen, 'Ted's personality could be a bit tricky [...] and I think Douglas Lilburn didn't want him [...] as a colleague'. Nielsen's role as junior lecturer meant that she taught the classes which no one else particularly wanted to teach: form in music, keyboard and aural. She also took some harmony tutorials, working closely with Lilburn, which she enjoyed immensely. These experiences coupled with her time in the States reinforced her belief that Canterbury was behind current trends and that its music, pleasant though some of

¹³² John Mansfield Thomson, 'Page, Frederick Joseph', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, (2000) in The Encyclopedia of New Zealand <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/5p3/page-frederick-joseph>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

it was to listen to and perform, now sounded old-hat. This attitude may also have been coloured by Page's interest in new music and his attitude towards Canterbury and its staff whom he described as 'the fuddy-duddies down there'. Nielsen knew too of Griffiths's feelings about Page whom he had no time for: 'He just thought he was an arrogant and self-opinionated [...] and vicious man'. There was truth on both sides. Nielsen soon discovered that Page was not averse to attacking his own staff members Douglas Lilburn and David Farquhar. Page and Lilburn were quite often falling out, with Page also calling Lilburn an old fuddy-duddy.

Nonetheless, there was always a professional relationship between the two universities. They would sometimes be paired for assessment purposes, and papers would either be sent up from Canterbury for Wellington staff to mark or staff, namely Nielsen, would go down to Christchurch to assess their students' work. This provided the opportunity to reconnect with Ritchie and other staff including, in the early days, William Hawkey. Later on, Ritchie, who was fastidious in his sense of fairness, also asked Victoria to (re)mark all of son Anthony's papers so that there could be no question of bias due to his own position at Canterbury. It was apparent that Canterbury's concern around impartiality had led to some rather harsh marking and invariably Anthony would receive much improved marks from the Victoria staff Ross Harris and Gordon Burt.

As Nielsen gained experience, and different courses were introduced at Victoria she became involved in teaching music analysis of which there were several topics of various periods. This led to the introduction of a new course devised by Nielsen called 'Executant Analysis' which she taught until her retirement at the end of 1993. This course arose from her perspective as a performer and was aimed at bridging the gap between the theory of analysis and performance in practice. For the students, this involved looking at the score from another perspective, in other words being able to role-play: 'pretend you're the conductor, you get your score and take it away from the instrument and really focus on what you think is

in that score [...], things you might discover and [...] decide [...] to do things with’.

Nielsen’s retirement from the university in late 1993, at which time she had attained the position of Reader, simply meant a change in focus from academia to performance rather than a cessation of work. She featured in radio broadcasts and commercial recordings, performing a variety of music which included a large amount of New Zealand works with a particular emphasis on Lilburn. Other performing roles included chamber music recitals and travelling accompanist to singers and instrumentalists such as violinist Ruth Pearl. In 2001, by invitation from the Music Department at Canterbury Nielsen performed Ritchie’s *Three Caricatures for Piano* (1972, rev. 1987) at his eightieth birthday. She enjoyed playing the pieces, finding that they worked well for her and were infinitely more pleasing than the *Suite for Piano* she had performed decades earlier.

Perhaps Ritchie too had recognised that the Suite material was not suitable for piano. A few years following her performance in Christchurch, Nielsen heard a brass group performing in Wellington and recognised, at least some of the same pieces: ‘he had obviously recycled them [...] [for] part of the *Partita for Brass* [...]. I felt at the time they worked better for brass – because he wasn’t a pianist’. Two years after his eightieth birthday concert Ritchie stayed with Nielsen while he was in Wellington to attend the first performance of his revised Samuel Marsden Overture. On hearing the work at the recital, Margaret was reminded of Farquhar’s *Ring Around the Moon* and the way he had developed the musical ideas into a suite. She suggested to Ritchie that he ‘could expand the lovely little dance-like ideas’ into an orchestral piece. Having spent some time on this new version of the work for this performance, he was perhaps somewhat cross with the suggestion. In a tone that brooked no argument he responded: ‘Oh, I don’t think I can be bothered’.

Middle years as Professor and Head of Music at Canterbury

In 1961 Griffiths tendered his resignation as Professor of Music at the university to take effect from 31 January 1962.¹³³ A tribute concert on 18 October in honour of Griffiths's service to music in Canterbury marked this event. The entire programme of Griffiths's compositions was performed by around four hundred musicians from the two local choral society choirs (Harmonic and Royal Musical), the University Madrigal Singers, the John Ritchie String Orchestra, and guests Edmund Bohan (tenor), Michael Toovey (organ), Maurice Till and Anthony Peek (piano), and vocal trio Anita Ritchie, Nan Anderson and Winston Sharp.¹³⁴ The concert was well attended and, by all accounts, a celebratory and musical success. Griffiths's composing style was described as resting 'securely on the solid and irreplaceable foundation of a classical harmonic structure with a leaven of his own individual ideas and a sense of genuine rhythmic and harmonic invention'.¹³⁵ Of significance in light of Griffiths's retirement, was Ritchie's promotion to Professor of Music at Canterbury University College, and in early 1962 a new era for both Ritchie and the university commenced.

This marked the final step in independence for the New Zealand universities. From 1957 each regional university had begun to manage its own finances rather than the previous centrally, single administered system. A name change also occurred; Canterbury officially became the University of Canterbury. The final tie with the old regime was broken in January, 1962 with the introduction of an individual coat of arms and conferment of degrees by each institution. Ritchie's promotion to Professor (and automatically also Head) of Music was publicised in late 1961 in both *The Star* and *Press* on 20 and 21 December respectively following the University Council's announcement on 20 December. A reasonably comprehensive summary of Ritchie's career to date and details of his personal life were included in the article signifying the importance placed on his appointment.

¹³³ Ritchie papers, Vice-Chancellor folder; a letter from the university shows that approval was granted for Griffiths to be appointed honorary part-time lecturer in the second half of the year following the end of his current term.

¹³⁴ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1961-December 1961. Peek's name is not in the programme.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

MR J. RITCHIE NEW MUSIC PROFESSOR

MR J. A. RITCHIE, senior lecturer in music at the University of Canterbury, has been appointed Professor of Music to succeed Dr Vernon Griffiths. Mr Ritchie's appointment was announced to-day by the University Council.

Dr Griffiths will retire on January 31.

Mr Ritchie has been a member of the staff of the university since 1947. In that year he was appointed a junior lecturer in music, in 1949 a lecturer, and in 1953 a senior lecturer. He received his academic training at the University of Otago, Canterbury University College, the Dunedin Teachers' Training College, and Trinity College of Music, London.

Aged 40

Mr Ritchie, who was born in Wellington, is aged 40. He is married with five children.

After reading for the degree of bachelor of music, he pursued post-graduate studies under Professor Griffiths at Canterbury in 1946, and further during refresher leave at Harvard University in the first semester of 1956-57.

He had war service from 1941 to 1946, and was commissioned pilot in the Fleet Air Arm.

Mr Ritchie established the John Ritchie String Orchestra in Christchurch on a professional basis, and was the

originator of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation.

He was in charge of the music department while Professor Griffiths was overseas on refresher leave, and at that time, with the external assessor, he was responsible for the degree examinations in music.

Sportsmen

In his student days he was an all-round sportsman, and won a hockey "blue" twice at the Dunedin Teachers' College.

He has conducted the university orchestra since 1951, and the university choir

from 1955 to 1959 and again this year.

Conductor

His conducting includes three occasions as guest conductor of the National Orchestra.

He conducted the combined provincial choirs festival at the 1950 centennial performance.

Mr Ritchie has executed numerous commissioned works of music.

His work is well-known overseas, and has been published there.

Mr Ritchie has an impressive list of publications to his credit, both music compositions and literary work on music.

He has made numerous broadcast talks on music, and has frequently broadcast as a conductor of orchestras.



Mr J. A. Ritchie

Figure 40: Ritchie's appointment as Professor of Music publicised in the *Star*, 20 December 1961. Ritchie Papers. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

According to his staff record card, the position commanded a significantly higher salary of two thousand eight hundred pounds, an increase of one thousand eight hundred pounds as Senior Lecturer although there may have been annual increases from 1953 which were not recorded. Increases from 1965 to 1977 are, however, noted.

Griffiths had provided the leadership and mentoring which allowed Ritchie to develop his own style of teaching and other musical and administration qualities and ideas, including the formation of the string orchestra. The notion of establishing a string quartet at the music department had been high on the department's agenda and with Council approval granted late in 1961, advertising for players began early the next year.

P.O. Box 1471

UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY,
Christchurch, C.1,
New Zealand.

1st February, 1962.

Dear

This is to inform you of the proposal to appoint a String Quartet to the staff of the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Applications for the position are now invited, and you will find enclosed with this letter the formal Conditions of Appointment. It seems desirable however to make known certain additional information in order to demonstrate fully the comprehensive nature of the Quartet appointment.

The duties expected of the players, as outlined in the Conditions of Appointment, will be confined almost entirely to the period March - October inclusive. The Quartet will be encouraged to accept outside engagements not only during vacation, but also when the University is in session. These engagements need not necessarily be restricted to New Zealand. All fees resulting from them will be negotiated privately and retained in full by the players.

There is an extraordinary demand for chamber music in New Zealand - audiences of more than one thousand for distinguished visiting ensembles attend concerts several times a year in Christchurch alone. These audiences have come to appreciate many of the refinements in the art of Quartet playing. The proposed Quartet at the University of Canterbury will be the first full-time chamber music appointment in New Zealand and it is confidently expected that there will be a great demand for concert performances throughout the whole country - in fact an ensemble of exceptionally high standard will find an almost unlimited demand for their services.

The New Zealand Federation of Chamber Music Societies can be expected to offer tours from time to time. These normally are of about twenty concerts given in all the main cities. The Broadcasting Service offers regular studio engagements and of course there will be many other groups and societies calling for quartet recitals.

The fees from this additional work together with the University salary of £1100 should amount to a substantial income, certainly not less than £2000 per annum for players of international standing, and considerably more should the positions be filled by a most distinguished Quartet.

Brief mention must be made of the fine climate and exceptional natural beauty of New Zealand, and it might be of interest to note that housing conditions in Christchurch are not a problem at present.

I should be grateful if you would bring the contents of the enclosed "Conditions of Appointment" to the attention of those known to you who might be interested.

Yours faithfully,

John A. Ritchie
Professor of Music.

Figure 41: Letter calling for applicants for the string quartet residency at the University of Canterbury. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The call for applicants brought in submissions from six established quartets as well as a number of individuals who were interested in forming a group with other players. It was expected that the appointment process would take a period of time due to the range of applicants across a number of countries; applications had been received from New Zealand, Canada, the United Kingdom, and America. In September, vice-chancellor Dr L. L. Pownall announced that the Alard String Quartet of Donald Hopkins, Joanne Zagst (violins), Raymond Page (viola) and Leonard Feldman (cello) from Wilmington, Ohio, would commence its full time position in January 1963. Dr Pownall was pleased to declare that Canterbury was the first university in New Zealand to make such an appointment: 'The University

of Canterbury will make the quartet available for the enjoyment of the city of Christchurch, the university district, and other parts of New Zealand'.¹³⁶

By the time of Ritchie's transition to Professor and Head of Music at Canterbury, he had been lecturing and working alongside Griffiths for over fifteen years. The Professorship encompassed a greater responsibility and required additional time for administration of the music department. A closer relationship with the Vice-Chancellor's office and involvement in University committees and decision making ensued. Reporting on matters to the Vice-Chancellor, (firstly Leslie (known as Leigh) Pownall then Neville Phillips from 1966) relating to staff appointments including resident ensembles, salaries and promotions, courses, student matters, scholarships, and affiliated organisations and committees such as the Christchurch Music Civic Council and the Pan Pacific Arts Festival was required. One of the earliest such items related to the Alard Quartet in which Ritchie in a letter to Pownall expressed his satisfaction of the group's appointment both in terms of performance and personalities: 'I am more than ever convinced that we did the right thing [...]. They possess an undoubted sympathy for the academic environment.'¹³⁷ Audience numbers were reportedly excellent and the response from public, broadcasting, and music aficionados had been enthusiastic.

Alas it was also Ritchie's role to advise Pownall of the sudden resignation of the Alard Quartet members part way through their tenure. While Ritchie confirmed that this was incredibly disappointing for all concerned including the University Council which had embraced the concept of hiring a resident quartet, he was quick to justify the ensemble's appointment in terms of the quality of its work as performers and teachers, and its success in working alongside pianist, Maurice Till. He also referred to the university's ability to attract a first-rate ensemble with relatively modest salaries of one thousand one hundred pounds per annum when other universities in Australia were currently obliged to offer Senior Lectureship roles for specialist players and teachers. Thus, he put a positive spin on it: 'In a

¹³⁶ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1962-December 1962.

¹³⁷ Ritchie papers, Vice-Chancellor folder, letter dated 2 July 1963.

highly competitive market they have now been offered a richly lucrative inducement to return to the U.S.A.'. Additionally, there were financial savings; in breaking their contract, the Alard were now responsible for all personal travelling costs related to the appointment.

Recognising that it was too late to attempt the process of advertising and appointing a group for 1965, and keen to ensure continuity of the developments in performance and practical teaching which had transpired, Ritchie suggested an interim solution to Council. By Ritchie's invitation, the Berkshire Quartet, current residents at Indiana University, which was due to give a Master Class Series at Canterbury over the month of February, were approached. Ritchie proposed that the quartet be offered a short-term residency until August following their Australasian tour from March to mid-April and that the master class programme contribute to the Practical Course qualifications of participating Canterbury students. The proposal was agreed to by the University but in October Ritchie received news from Berkshire first violinist, Urico Rossi, that the group had declined the offer.

Although Ritchie strove to find alternative arrangements it was not until 1966 that an ensemble replacement was found in the Prague Quartet; however in an effort to accommodate practical music students beyond piano (in addition to the quartet players, flutist Mrs Overda Page, wife of Alard viola player Raymond Page, had been employed), two instrumental woodwind teachers were employed on a part-time basis; Mrs M. Rivenburg who was the wife of newly appointed musicology lecturer Leonard Rivenburg (also an accomplished French horn player), and Mr Aage Nielsen. Efforts by Ritchie to secure a continuous stream of resident quartets in the ensuing years of his headship had only limited success – although the quality of the ensembles who were employed was never in doubt – with part-time teachers filling in the gaps: 1968 (The Albern Quartet), 1969 (The Czech Quartet), 1975 (Camerata Quartet), 1979 (McMaster Quartet), and 1981 (Alard Quartet).

Prior to Ritchie's promotion as Head of School, his official non-departmental duties within the university were limited to one year as President of the Canterbury Branch of the Association of University of Teachers (AUT) in 1960.¹³⁸ From 1962 this changed dramatically with his involvement in an increasing number of committees especially in a leadership role. A greater level of responsibility was attained from the early 1970s as a closer relationship with the Vice-Chancellor, Neville Phillips, was formed. Ritchie's contribution to the university's organisations included the Tutorial Class Committee (member 1964-1965); Orientation Committee (member 1962-1963, Chairman 1964); Regional Syllabus Committee in Music (Chairman 1964); Canterbury branch of the Union of Graduates in Music (President 1962); Combined Unit (Chairman 1965-1966); University of Canterbury Staff Club (President 1966); and the W.E.A. Tutorial Classes Committee (1967). Additional notable roles were as Dean of Faculty of Fine Arts and Music (1964-1967 and 1970-1973); Standing Committee (1970, 1973-1974); Research and Leave Committee (member, 1972, Chairman 1973); Professorial Board (Deputy Chairman 1973-1974) and University Council (member 1973-1974) followed by various periods as Deputy and Acting Vice-Chancellor from 1974-1979.¹³⁹ In 1979 he was also appointed a member of an ad hoc committee to make recommendations for the appointment of Registrar and given a two-year appointment to the Curriculum Committee with a further appointment as the Vice-Chancellor's nominee on the Academic Administration Committee. Such additional duties required varying degrees of time, leadership and administration, which had to be managed alongside his departmental headship and teaching, performance, other (non-university) musical and educational commitments, composing, as well as recreational activities and home and family life.

In 1965 the University of Canterbury's annual graduation ceremony for the year took place on 6 May at its usual venue; the procession of graduands, staff and officials left the university on Worcester Street and wound its way to the King

¹³⁸ Ritchie papers, Confidential Staff Record Card copy, Other Service, part 4.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

Edward Barracks on the corner of Cashel and Montreal Streets. Hawkey was the choral director and Michael Toovey was organist for the ceremony while Ritchie was Dean of the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts.¹⁴⁰ There were only a few music graduates: Christopher (Kit) Bolland Powell (Bachelor of Music with second class honours), Jocelyn Margaret Hutton (Bachelor of Music), while John Michael Jennings, Senior Scholar (later a lecturer at Canterbury) and Paul Kilford Brown both received Diplomas in Music. Three Bachelor of Arts recipients had majored in music and Brian Pritchard, who was later appointed lecturer in music at Canterbury in 1969, was also awarded Master of Arts with First-Class Honours in History and Literature and Music.¹⁴¹ Although Toovey was on sick leave at the time, there was no indication of what was to follow; two days after graduation, Toovey died suddenly at just thirty-eight years of age leaving the Music Department staff in a state of shock both personally and professionally. Ritchie, who was five years Toovey's senior and who regarded Toovey as a close friend as well as respected colleague, was greatly affected.

Notwithstanding, a replacement had to be found quickly to cover Toovey's teaching obligations and David Sell was employed part-time to fill the gap. He was subsequently appointed lecturer before the year was out. These events resulted in significant changes to the school of music since the departed and incoming lecturers were markedly different. Toovey was a Doctor in Music graduate from London with a Public School background. He was an exceptional keyboard player who brought with him performance skills which he utilised widely. Sells was a Canterbury graduate with a Master of Music from Durham University and had undertaken additional studies in music education and composition in Britain. Having been a secondary school teacher and schools' advisor, his expertise was, in the main, music education. Shortly after his appointment, a new music education degree was espoused and subsequently launched in 1966. Changes to the degree structure were implemented allowing two routes to gain a three-year Bachelor of Music – essentially one majoring in

¹⁴⁰ Jennings, p. 52.

¹⁴¹ Ritchie papers, Graduation Ceremony programme. Jennings, p. 99.

composition and the other in music education – with a fourth year honours degree available in composition. Other changes included an optional stage III paper which focussed on contemporary harmonic techniques and opportunities for the performance of new music. Performance however, which had been a large part of Ritchie's focus in music as he worked towards the establishment of a professional orchestra, remained outside the degree structure although changes for 1965 meant that performance was an option for credit in the Diploma of Music.

Between 1964 and 1965 several eminent musicians visited Canterbury including Dr. Ruth Railton (later Dame in 1966), Sir William Walton, and Peter Maxwell Davies (later Sir in 1987). Railton was in New Zealand for the week 22 to 29 February 1964 to meet with music educators including Ritchie, while Walton was scheduled to conduct the Symphony Orchestra in Auckland and Wellington at around the same time.¹⁴² It could be reasonably assumed that Maxwell Davies's visit was arranged to coincide with his position as Composer in Residence at the Elder Conservatorium of Music, University of Adelaide which he occupied from 1964 to 1965. As requested, Ritchie provided a report to the British High Commissioner of the time, Richard Hollyer, on Maxwell Davies's visit to Canterbury. Maxwell Davies was then thirty years old although Ritchie's portrayal of him would lend one to think he was perhaps describing someone ten years younger: 'a likeable, young chap [...]. Clearly he is rebellious [...] but it was not so clear as to what he was rebelling against, apart from the "establishment" in England'.

Obviously Ritchie was not particularly impressed with Maxwell Davies at that time. Maxwell Davies was purportedly surprised to learn of Canterbury's approach to composition studies in which students' work was performed and critiqued, and in fact sometimes published, since he expected to espouse this method as his own. Ritchie also rued the composer's apparent antagonism to his own university and to some of his nation's noted musicians but conceded that this

¹⁴² Ritchie papers, Letters folder; Correspondence between the British High Commissioner Richard N. Hollyer and John Ritchie confirms the visits by Railton, Walton and Maxwell Davies. A second letter from Hollyer to Ritchie asks for a report on Maxwell Davies.

was his business. Nonetheless, Ritchie considered that there was value in the visit. Students were informed of current modern practices in other parts of the world and could learn about one such composer's techniques first-hand. Maxwell Davies engaged with the students in a lively manner and, as was to be expected, there was a mixed response; traditionalists were dismayed by his views while modernists were keen to enter into discussions on new concepts.

Refresher Leave in 1968: Visiting Professor at Exeter University and Travel to Europe and the United States of America

In late 1967 having relinquished his role as conductor of the John Ritchie String Orchestra and with his attention now focussed on his university position and related roles both within academia and in the wider community, Ritchie went on a year's refresher leave from Canterbury, travelling abroad with Anita and their three youngest children, Elizabeth, Simon and Anthony. His leave was carefully planned and a schedule was drawn up which included travel in England, Europe, and the United States of America. Most of the documented activities centred on music including attendance at the ISME conference in Dijon from 2 to 8 July 1968. Some adjustment to the original programme was made after Ritchie accepted a late offer to fulfil the role of Visiting Professor at the University of Exeter for their summer term by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr F.J. Llewellyn (ex-Vice-Chancellor at Canterbury from 1955 to 1958); nonetheless their European travel included Brussels, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria.¹⁴³

At the time of Llewellyn's invitation, Exeter's newly established music department consisted of just two staff, organist Reginald Moore, and David Crawthra (1929-1995) who was shared with another department. Moore had suffered ill-health and cover was urgently needed for his role. In fact, Moore's illness was to prove very grave and he died on 25 May. Soon afterwards, Exeter made a permanent appointment in Professor Arthur Hutchings (1906-1989).¹⁴⁴ Hutchings arrived from Durham University where he had been professor of music since 1947 to

¹⁴³ 'Llewellyn, Frederick John', *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, ed. by A. H. McLintock, (1966) <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/1966/llewellyn-frederick-john>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

¹⁴⁴ Ritchie papers, Letters folder. Letter from Llewellyn to Ritchie, 25 March 1968.

head the school at Exeter on Ritchie's departure, joining Crawthra and two additional staff who had since been appointed.¹⁴⁵

The significance of the family's temporary move abroad was heralded by a number of farewell functions, both personal and professional, in the month prior to their departure; Ritchie was guest conductor for a Harmonic Society concert, and a School of Music staff dinner was held in his honour. On 17 October the travellers began the first leg of their journey aboard the ill-fated *Wahine* bound for Wellington.¹⁴⁶ They spent time with family and friends for a few days – Ritchie even managed a round of golf with members of the National Orchestra – before embarking on the ship which took them to England via Auckland, Fiji, Raratonga, Tahiti, Panama, Port Everglades, Florida, and Bermuda.¹⁴⁷ On 23 November the family set foot in Southampton and were welcomed by Alex and Diane Baxter at their home in Great Brickhill, Buckinghamshire, where they were to stay until arrangements had been made in Exeter.

Ritchie made his first trip to Exeter a few days later to familiarise himself with the university and meet with staff, and for the following few weeks until Christmas spent his time between the two locations while the rest of the family remained at Brickhill. Simon and Anthony attended school on weekdays while Anita and Elizabeth explored the vicinity and enjoyed a day trip to London by train. In early December in nearby Heath and Reach, Ritchie and Anita purchased a Cortina motor vehicle to use in their travels both in Britain and Europe, and the family visited Exeter where a suitable house for the duration of their stay in the city from January until the end of May was decided upon. Elizabeth, meanwhile, found herself employment at a local eatery. With the school term over on 19 December, the family was able to spend time preparing for Christmas and on recreational

¹⁴⁵ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, report on the music department from Llewellyn to Ritchie, 27 June 1968.

¹⁴⁶ The *Wahine* sinking is New Zealand's worst modern maritime disaster with the loss of fifty-one lives on 10 April 1968. Two people died in the weeks following which brought the total loss to fifty-three. Chris Maclean, 'Wellington places: Wellington Harbour', *The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, (2016) <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/13460/wahine-disaster>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

¹⁴⁷ Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book, Events and Places Visited, p.1.

activities. They visited London, took walks in the countryside, called on friends, visited cultural institutions such as the museum at Leicester, and attended church services. Additionally, Ritchie enjoyed watching an All Blacks versus Barbarians match at Twickenham, taking delight in the full-time score of New Zealand 11, Barbarians 6.

While Elizabeth remained in Exeter, the rest of the family spent a pleasant Christmas Day with the Baxters after early morning mass at All Saints Church, Bletchley. Gifts were exchanged and opened beside the Christmas tree in the dining room and traditional fare of turkey and goose was served. The next few days were mostly spent in the vicinity of Great Brickhill but also included a visit to London where they attended a performance of *The Nutcracker* by the London Festival Ballet (now The English National Ballet) at the Royal Festival Hall.

The first few days of 1968 were spent relatively quietly. The family paid a visit to Botley Cemetery, Oxford where they placed flowers on the grave of Anita's only brother, (George) Mansell Proctor, a Flying Officer for the New Zealand Air Force, who had died on 23 August 1945, aged twenty-two. It was a significant and poignant moment particularly for Anita, who at the time of his death was caring for baby daughter Judith in Dunedin while Ritchie was engaged in war duties in England.¹⁴⁸ With the war in Europe over and the recent surrendering of the Japanese, Mansell's death dealt a huge blow to the Proctor family who were looking forward to his imminent return to New Zealand. Years later during our interviews together Ritchie could recall the lingering sadness within the family at the loss of their only son and brother.

On 4 January the Ritchies celebrated Alex's fiftieth birthday with the Baxters, presenting Alex with the ubiquitous bottle of whiskey and then spent part the rest of the day preparing for their stay in Exeter. Leaving early the next morning, they travelled via Leighton Buzzard, Tring, Wendover, Wallingford, Newbury and Andover, visiting Stonehenge and other places of interest along the way before

¹⁴⁸ Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book, 1 January 1968.

arriving in Exeter mid-afternoon. After a few days settling in, shopping for supplies, some sightseeing, and visiting the local attractions such as Exmouth Zoo, the two boys began their schooling at Bradley Rowe First School which was situated a short ten-minute walk from their temporary home at 5 Jennifer Close.¹⁴⁹ While Ritchie was mostly engaged with his position at Exeter University from 10 January, the family still found ample time to enjoy local attractions in the area as well as various other towns and cities. Weekend trips included visiting Torquay, Bristol, Bath, Basingstoke, London, Harlow, Salisbury, Southampton, the Isle of Wight, West Yarmouth, Budleigh Salterton, Shrewsbury, Wales, Barnstable and Bedford. Ritchie was also keen to revisit a number of old war haunts and so paid a special visit to Henstridge airport where he had been stationed for flight training, in particular dummy deck landings, in 1945.

Over the next few months, Ritchie and on occasion the family, visited various universities and attended recitals by a range of groups including the Dartington Quartet, a Bristol Orchestra rehearsal, Exeter Cathedral Choir, London Woodwind Ensemble, the Prague Quartet, the Torquay Training Orchestra (with Robin Perks), and, early in the year, the Alberni Quartet at Harlow Technical College. The quartet was currently the resident ensemble for the city of Harlow but was soon leaving to take up residency at Canterbury. Its members were keen to learn of life in Ritchie's home country and to this end Ritchie and Anita were invited to discuss aspects of music with other 'key people in Harlow' at the community building in the city in early February.¹⁵⁰

Following the recital, the Ritchie's enjoyed dinner with the Alberni Quartet's cellist and his wife, Gregory and Susan Baron. Ritchie was particularly interested in the terms under which the ensemble was contracted to the city and following this exchange, he wrote and submitted an article to the *Press* outlining the Alberni

¹⁴⁹ The school closed in 2005. Government UK, 'Bradley Rowe First School', *Get Information About Schools* <<https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/Establishments/Establishment/Details/113075>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

¹⁵⁰ Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book, Sunday, 28 January 1968.

Quartet's employment with the Harlow District Council.¹⁵¹ The two conditions under which the group had been appointed were noted: 'that it should reside in Harlow [and] that it should be a professional quartet'. The ensemble's income was made up of a grant provided by the town of two thousand pounds a year (or five hundred pounds each) plus engagement earnings. This was 'no sinecure but it blends the elements of encouragement and challenge to a nice degree'. The Alberni quartet was just one of a number which Ritchie had scheduled to meet and listen to, in particular a San Francisco address for the 'Prague 4tet's' address with the dates 21 February and 7 April noted in the 1968 book signalled his intention to meet with the quartet's members (Břetislav Novotný (1st violin), Miroslav Richter (2nd violin), Hubert Šimáček (viola), Zdeněk Koníček (violoncello)), whom he had been closely associated with during their year's residency at Canterbury in 1966.

As the Alberni *Press* article and early 1968 notebook entries indicate, the year's success and future plans for Canterbury were never far from Ritchie's thoughts. Reminders to contact people or arrange meetings were all recorded in his notebook:

Write to Brian Pritchard/also Nigel Fortune re R.M.A meeting & visit
Arrange visit to Dartington
Book reviews
Ring Lionel Dakers [organist, Exeter]
Plans – Hungary, U.S.A.
Composition of Canterbury Academia Overture
Prague

In the meantime Anita who was looking after the household and travel arrangements wrote to travel agents Thomas Cook to request the reservation and purchase of tickets for a performance of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* at Bayreuth

¹⁵¹ Ritchie papers, Ritchie's 1968 notebook, p. 3.

on 28 July 28.¹⁵² Plans for the Ritchie couple's three week trip beginning 9 September to the United States of America were also confirmed.

Ritchie delivered a number of addresses during this period; a talk locally to the Exeter Musical Society and a lecture at Aberystwyth University in March during a visit to Wales where he spent time with hosts Ian and Elizabeth Parrott. Ritchie's presentation at Aberystwyth included a fairly comprehensive appraisal of the development of music in New Zealand.¹⁵³ Beginning with a background of New Zealand and its culture, Ritchie covered the general topics of climate, topography, education, social welfare, sport and British influence before he outlined an historical portrayal of the arts – in particular music and musicians – in the country. He spoke of the predominantly British influences on music in New Zealand which had emanated from the historical choral traditions of Wales, the Midlands and the South of England. This in turn had given rise to the Mendelssohn Society in 1862 and the Liedertafel in around 1880, and later the music of Parry, Charles Wood, Stanford, Vaughan Williams, Holst, Walton, and Elgar dominated. The eventual arrival of orchestral music to New Zealand in 1947, the inception of its first Symphony Orchestra, and a visit by Boyd Neel were also conveyed. In discussing the direct influence of individuals now resident in the country, Ritchie cited only Vernon Griffiths and Victor Galway as being of particular note. Additionally, he acknowledged that while the country's musical influences were apparent, New Zealand compositions lacked the indigenous folk music which was inherent in many European and British works.

Ritchie presented his talk with the aid of recorded music extracts which he played and then remarked on. Such commentary provides insight into his views at that time of both composers and compositions. Examples included Pruden's *Dances of Brittany*: 'notice the lack of weight and depth [...]. We're better at the spirit of AE Housmann than the tragedy of Thomas Hardy'; his own *Kyrie and Gloria*: 'we tend to compose to order' and the self-deprecating 'not all as unadventurous as me;

¹⁵² Due to a mix up with the booking organiser, this did not eventuate. Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book, p. 161.

¹⁵³ Ritchie papers, Refresher Leave Notebook 1968; loose pages contain a draft of this talk.

the first movement of Lilburn's *Landfall in Unknown Seas* and the ending of Symphony No. 2: 'Are these the novel sounds of a serious N.Z. music?'; Farquhar's *Ring Round the Moon*; a Tony Watson string quartet; and lastly Pruden's *Harbour Nocturne*: 'Finally, a work which tries to evoke the sounds of a bush harbour in the evening – tug whistles, bird calls, ships engine'. Ritchie also attended a small number of recitals in Wales, notably a predominantly twentieth-century concert given by the Aberystwyth University's college choral society and orchestra. Significantly, this featured the first full performance of Parrott's *Jubilate Deo* and Ritchie's *Concertino for Clarinet and Strings* was also performed. A review of the recital published in the *South Wales Evening Post* on 6 March was reasonably favourable, stating that the *Concertino* was a work 'of smallish dimensions but successful within its limits [...] [and] most effective in lighter fast moving moments'.¹⁵⁴

On 21 March Ritchie left London for a ten-day trip to Hungary, departing from Victoria Station by train and travelling through Surrey, Kent on his way to Dover. It was a rough channel crossing by all accounts but Ritchie arrived safely at Ostend, Brussels, and went on to Budapest, Hungary by train via Cologne, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Passau, Linz and Vienna.¹⁵⁵ Ritchie's time was primarily taken up with visiting educational institutions but first he made contact with Laszlo Vikar (1929-2017) at the Hungarian Academy of Science, Institute of Ethnomusicology. He particularly wanted to visit the room where Bartók had undertaken his commissioned research on folk songs from 1934 to 1940. Ritchie noted the array of material of both Bartók and Kodaly which was housed there: 'M/S of B & Kodaly copyings, 4,000 tapes (Bartók collected 400) Edison phonograph – cylinders of Bartók 1910. Recording engineer.' Visits to the following schools ensued: Normal Grammar School with teacher Maria Katanics (1929-2017), Normal Primary School with Edith Lantos (1928-2009), Music Primary School with Korsas Miklosne, the Municipal School of Music with Vera

¹⁵⁴ Ritchie papers, Correspondence 1960s folder.

¹⁵⁵ Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book, Monday, 25 March 1968.

Irsai, and the Nursery School (Kindergarten class) with Madame Vikar, the wife of Laszlo Vikar.¹⁵⁶

Anita tended to the house and children in Ritchie's absence – both Anthony and Simon appeared to have suffered from various ailments during their time away – as well as spending time with neighbours and friends. She also checked on mail which had been sent to Exeter University from New Zealand and received correspondence from Athol Mann, Dobbs Frank and Alex Lindsay who all painted a glowing picture of Christchurch's musical scene.¹⁵⁷ Although she waited expectantly for news from Ritchie, the postal service from Hungary appeared to be unreliable. A letter Ritchie posted on 27 March arrived five days later by which time Ritchie was back in Exeter.

Travel in Europe, the United Kingdom and United States of America

Plans were underway for the family's European driving and camping tour during which Ritchie was scheduled to attend the Eighth International ISME conference being held in Dijon from 2 to 8 of July. Prior to their departure the Ritchies made several local trips, some for the boys' entertainment such as Whipsnade Zoo and the Abbey and Zoo (now Safari Park) at Woburn, as well as further afield. They travelled to London for a few days and met up with a number of New Zealand friends and musicians including past John Ritchie String Orchestra members Angela Lindsay (née Connal) whom they stayed with and Irene (Rene) Morgan. Ritchie and Anita accompanied Irene Morgan to a London Symphony Orchestra concert at Festival Hall and the two women later enjoyed a performance of Michael Tippett's opera *Midsummer Marriage*. The work was lengthy and lasted almost four hours from 10.00 a.m. until nearly 2.00 p.m. While in the city Anita and the boys also visited the London attractions Madame Tussauds and Fun Palace while Ritchie attended a conference and social gathering at the Royal

¹⁵⁶ 'Mária Mohayné Katanics: Obituary', *Liszt Academy* (2017) <<https://zeneakademia.hu/news/maria-mohayne-katanics-obituary-110442>> [accessed 14 July 2019]; 'In memorial Professor Edith Lantos 19.05.1928-18.07.2009', *National Professional Association of Kindergarten Teachers for Education of Preschoolers* <<http://www.ovodak.org.hu/english/memorial-of-edit-lantos/148-in-memorial-professor-edith-lantos>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

¹⁵⁷ Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book, Thursday, 28 March 1968.

Schools of Music College. Soon after their return to Brickhill, Ritchie and Anita returned to Oxford where New Zealand soprano Marie Landis (née Sutherland) was performing as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*. Anita later wrote: ‘very good performance and wonderful to see Marie’.¹⁵⁸

In early May during a holiday weekend they travelled to Cornwall for a pre-arranged visit to Malcolm Arnold and his wife, Isobel, at Primrose Cottage, St Merryn.¹⁵⁹ Based on his previous interactions with Arnold, Ritchie was expecting to be taken to the local public house so the two men could enjoy drinks together, but Arnold appeared much more inclined to remain at home with his family. Nonetheless, in time, champagne was duly offered and imbibed in what was ‘a very pleasant session’.¹⁶⁰ A scheduled trip for Ritchie to attend a conference in Paris on 19 May was scuppered by the widespread civil unrest of 1968 and ensuing strike action by millions of workers resulting in, amongst other things, the cancellation of the Cannes Film Festival. In the hope that he might be able to enter France by an alternative route, Ritchie flew to Jersey but, unable to travel further, returned to Exeter two days later.

The following Sunday, the Catholic Chaplaincy rehearsed Ritchie’s recently completed *Mass for Congregational Singing* (Mass No. 3). This, Ritchie’s only composition for the year, was sung the next week on Whit Sunday. With Ritchie’s term at Exeter coming to an end, the family prepared to leave their temporary home. Most of their belongings were packed and left with friends to be collected and shipped with them on their return to New Zealand in October. Letters were exchanged between the incoming Professor of Music, Arthur Hutchings and Ritchie to discuss the timing of Hutchings’s arrival in Exeter, and to confirm the materials and course outline for year one and two. The final book list for the Exeter music courses included Jacob’s *Orchestral Technique* and the relatively new Novello publication *The Invention and Composition of Music* (1958)

¹⁵⁸ Ritchie papers, Anita’s Trip Book, Tuesday, 9 April 1968.

¹⁵⁹ Ritchie papers, Letters, letter from Malcolm Arnold dated 25 April 1968 suggests to Ritchie that 3 or 4 April would be suitable dates for his visit.

¹⁶⁰ Ritchie papers, Anita’s Trip Book.

authored by Hutchings himself. The latter was also on Durham University's Book and Music List with the footnote: 'I apologise for requiring a book of my own, but it illustrates the processes of composition FROM THE CLASSICS and it saves our copying exercises'.¹⁶¹

Ritchie travelled north to visit York University before arriving at Durham where he had been invited to be visiting examiner for the Preliminary Honours in Music, Oral and Practical Examination alongside Hutchings and Dr Murray Brown. On his return, along with the last of the packing and bidding farewell to friends, neighbours and colleagues, he completed his final task as Visiting Professor of Music at Exeter, a report for the Vice-Chancellor on the recently established Music Department. On the last day of June, the family set off for Southampton and, with luggage and vehicle on board, sailed for Le Havre, Normandy at 11.00 p.m. They arrived at 7.00 a.m. the following morning but were detained by authorities because of some irregularity with their papers; however within an hour matters had been settled and they drove to Dijon via Yvetot, Mantes and Surance and booked into a camping ground that evening.

While Ritchie attended the ISME conference sessions over the following days Anita, Anthony, Simon and Malinda Cole, the young daughter of friends Douglas and Helen Cole who were also there for the conference, spent time exploring their surroundings including the local shops, and swimming in the nearby lake. On Monday, 8 July Ritchie attended the final conference meeting where Frank Callaway was elected President of ISME. The family enjoyed an invited lunch at the university before leaving Dijon in the afternoon. With Germany in sight, they drove to Freiburg via Gray, Vesoul, Vure, Belford, Cernay and Colmar before crossing the border, and booked into a small but pleasant camp at St Georg for the night. The following day was spent driving through the Black Forest enjoying the beautiful scenery inherent in its villages and farms driving via Wolfach and Freudenstacht and on to Stuttgart. Spending the night at a large camp site by the

¹⁶¹ Ritchie papers, Correspondence 1960s folder, University of Durham Music School Book and Music List – First Year Honours.

River Neckar they took the tram to the city the next morning and spent the day with Angela Lindsay's sister, singer Rosamunde Connal.

After a second night at the riverside camping ground, they set off early the next morning for Nuremburg passing through Schurabisch Hall and Crailsheim, and then took the autobahn to Berlin before stopping at Bayreuth to visit Wagner's memorial at the Festspiel house where various rehearsals could be heard through the open windows. Due to a complete lack of signage, they encountered some difficulty in finding their way to the Czechoslovakian border but eventually passed through German customs. Now behind the iron curtain in the Czech Republic, they drove through Cheb to Františkovy Lázně an historic spa town, rich in history with working steam locomotives. They arrived just in time to hear the Prague Quartet play an all-Beethoven programme and enjoyed a late supper with the musicians before retiring for the night. They decided to spend a few days in the vicinity of the town and first drove around forty kilometres inland to Pilsen where they met up with Jaroslav Karlovsky, the viola player with the Prague Quartet.

They proceeded on to Klatovy where a folk festival was underway, and first joined around two thousand worshippers who were jammed into the town's six hundred-seat church for a two-hour mass. The family then entered the market square where they jostled with the throngs milling around the array of market stalls and stopped to listen to a bagpiper who was playing one tune after another and was delighted when Ritchie jotted down one of the airs.¹⁶² Travelling in convoy with Karlovsky a day later, they arrived in Prague where they spent time with the quartet members over the next few days and took in some sightseeing including visits to several churches, a memorable visit to the Karlstejn Castle and its Chapel of the Holy Rood, and a day in and around Konopiste Castle and its grounds. Ritchie, Simon and Anthony attended a day time rehearsal in the quartet's studio ahead of an open air concert in the grounds of the Prague Castle.

¹⁶² Ritchie papers, newspaper cutting, article sent by Ritchie to the *Press* from Prague [n.d.].

Ritchie and Anita later joined the large audience for the event and thoroughly enjoyed the programme delivered by the quartet of Haydn, Mozart and Dvořák.

On 22 July they departed Prague and made their way to Heidenreichstein and Weidhopen, and from there to Vienna before driving on to Italy via St Michael, Judenburg, Friesach, Feldkirchen and Villach. They arrived in Tarvisio and found a camp at Forni di Sopra near the Mauria Pass. The following two weeks was spent similarly – driving, camping and sightseeing – before meeting up with Elizabeth in Salzburg on 6 August. Over the next few days they travelled back to Bayreuth to attend a performance of Wagner's *Lohengrin*. This was a substitute for *Tristan and Isolde* which they had originally hoped to see but a mix-up with the travel agent meant that the tickets were not booked. Nonetheless, the opera was a visual and musical feast which spanned several hours and included two one-hour intervals.

Several more days of travel followed as they headed back towards England, arriving in France on 19 August where they caught the ferry back to Southampton. It was the end of the Ritchie's seven-week European road trip but their travels were not quite finished. Once on British soil, they wended their way to Edinburgh via London, Newcastle and Liverpool, and visited Martin Setchel in Blackpool along the way. Ritchie attended a recital by the Melos ensemble and renewed his friendship with John McCaw who was performing Mahler with the Philharmonia Orchestra on 30 August. The following evening after spending the day enjoying a pleasant drive along the coast road to St Andrews and a visit to the Argyll works to see the golf clubs they manufactured, Ritchie and Anita attended an excellent performance of *Der Fliegende Holländer* with soloists David Ward and Anja Silja.

The next few days were spent travelling around the vicinity of Aberdeen and Edinburgh, and they called at another wartime training site, the now derelict Errol airfield, and the nearby Tay Bridge. From there the Ritchies travelled to Durham where they first visited the cathedral before meeting with the university's music department staff, Murray Brown and Hutchings together with Frederick Rimmer, the music professor from Glasgow University. The family arrived back at the

Baxters' home in Great Brickhill on Thursday, 5 September which left just a few days for the couple to complete their preparations for their three week trip to America, and their final weeks in Great Britain. Anthony remained with the Baxters, attending school at Great Brickhill, while Simon and Elizabeth accompanied their parents to London on Tuesday, 10 September before catching the train to Exeter; Simon stayed with friends the Cooks at Jennifer Close whilst Elizabeth travelled north to Bridlington where she had secured work.

The evening prior to their departure from London the Ritchies attended a Sadler's Wells Opera and Orchestra performance of *Die Meistersinger*. The opera ran for just over six hours and was, according to Anita a 'most memorable performance [...] [with] delightful singing and first class production [...] [and] a completely satisfying experience'. Leaving their hotel in Gloucester Place very early the next morning, they taxied to the then British European Airways check-in terminal at Knightsbridge before boarding the coach to Heathrow and on to the plane for the seven and a half hour flight to New York. After a day's sightseeing together, Ritchie left for Washington while Anita spent an extra day in New York before catching the greyhound bus to State College, Pennsylvania where she was met by Millie and Donald Hopkins and family.

Ritchie joined Anita and the Hopkinses a day later after visiting various institutions including the Lincoln Centre in New York. They spent time with the Alard Quartet members over the next week, listening to them rehearse and attended a recital by the group at Indiana, Pennsylvania. On 25 September a special event took place in the Pennsylvania State University Music Building's Recital Hall entitled 'Music by some New Zealand Composers: John A. Ritchie lecture/concert' Ritchie presented an illustrated talk on New Zealand composers while the Alard String Quartet and soprano Lorraine Gorrell performed the selected works. The programme included Ronald Tremain's *Four Medieval Lyrics for Mezzo Soprano and String Trio* (1964), John Ritchie's *String Quartet in G Minor* (Molto adagio, Scherzo and Allegro) and Larry Pruden's *String Trio*. The disappointing audience numbers was tempered with their enthusiastic response;

their appreciation for both Ritchie's talk and the players' performance was gratifying.¹⁶³

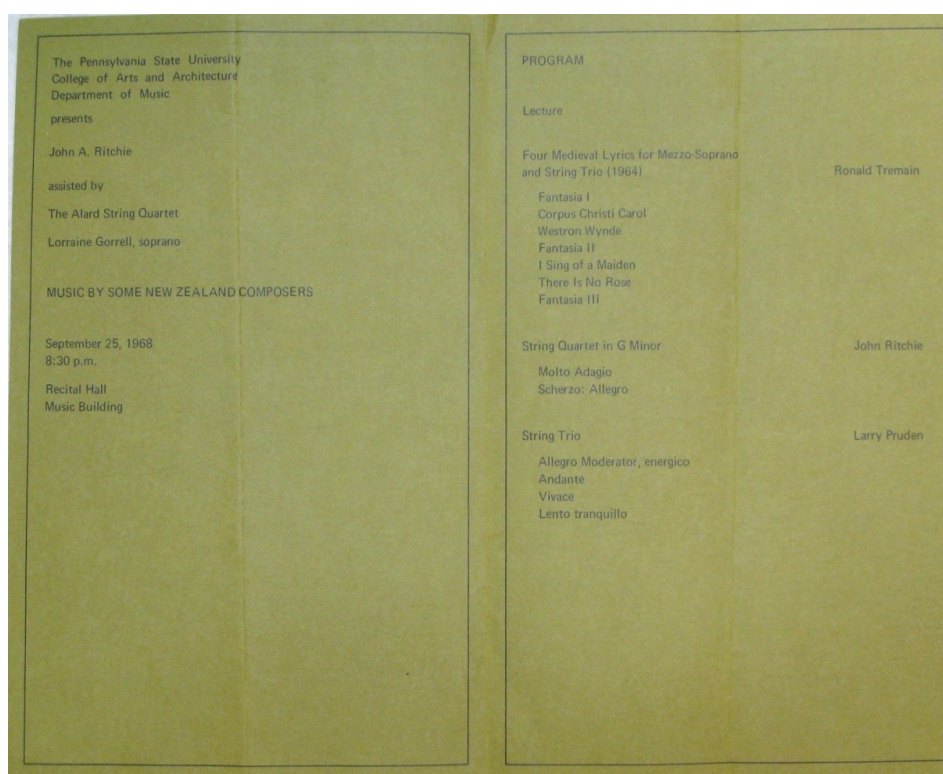


Figure 42: Programme of works by New Zealand composers performed by the Alard String Quartet at Pennsylvania State University, 25 September 1968. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The next day the quartet members bade farewell to the couple at the Greyhound bus terminal. Travelling to Buffalo, the Ritchies stopped for coffee with Ron Tremain and arranged to return to stay with him within a week. They travelled on to Toronto where they attended a performance of Richard Strauss' *Salome* and met with Boyd Neel. Over the next few days, Neel showed them the School of Music and the Conservatory, and gave Ritchie a number of ideas to take back to the music school at Canterbury. With his refresher leave report in mind, he spent some time reviewing and noting afresh thoughts of his time away.

¹⁶³ Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book, 25 September 1968.

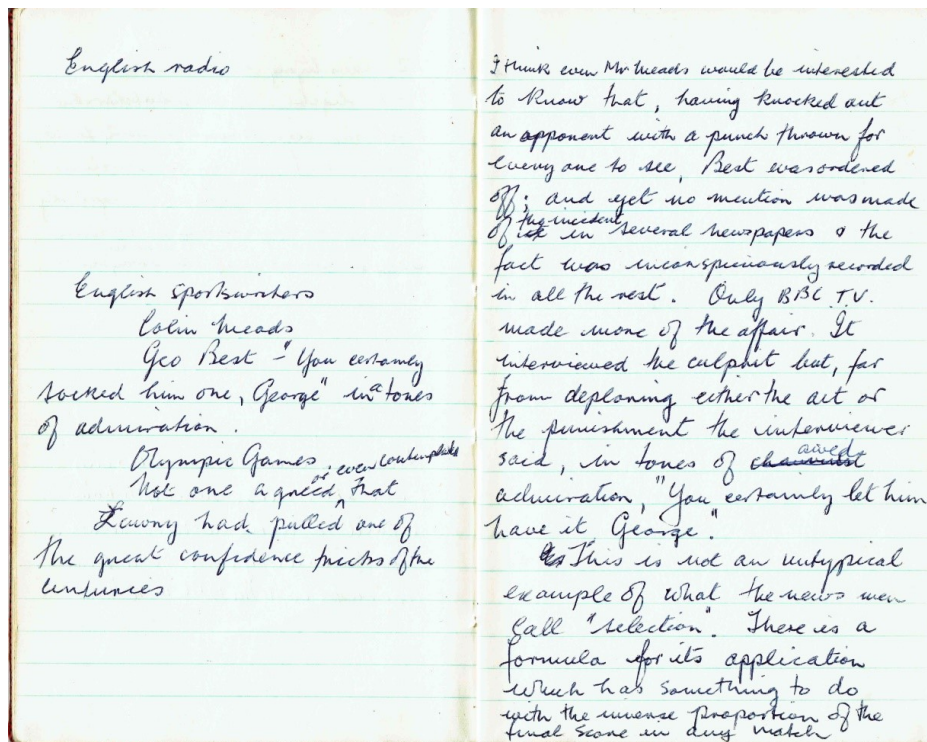


Figure 43: Ritchie's 1968 refresher leave notebook sample page 1. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

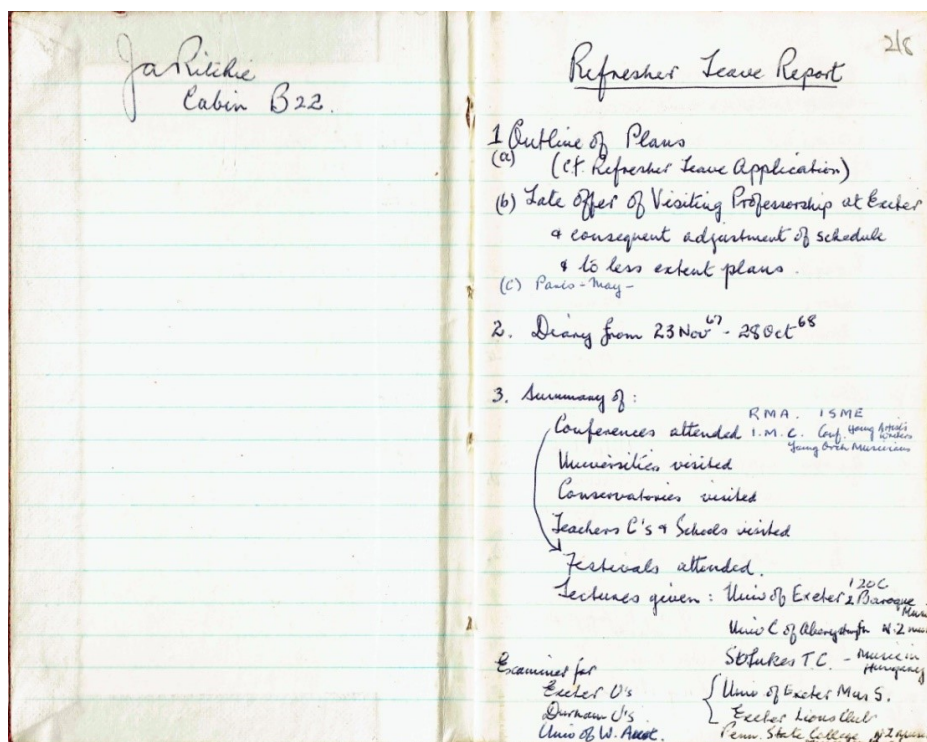


Figure 44: Ritchie's 1968 refresher leave notebook sample page 2. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

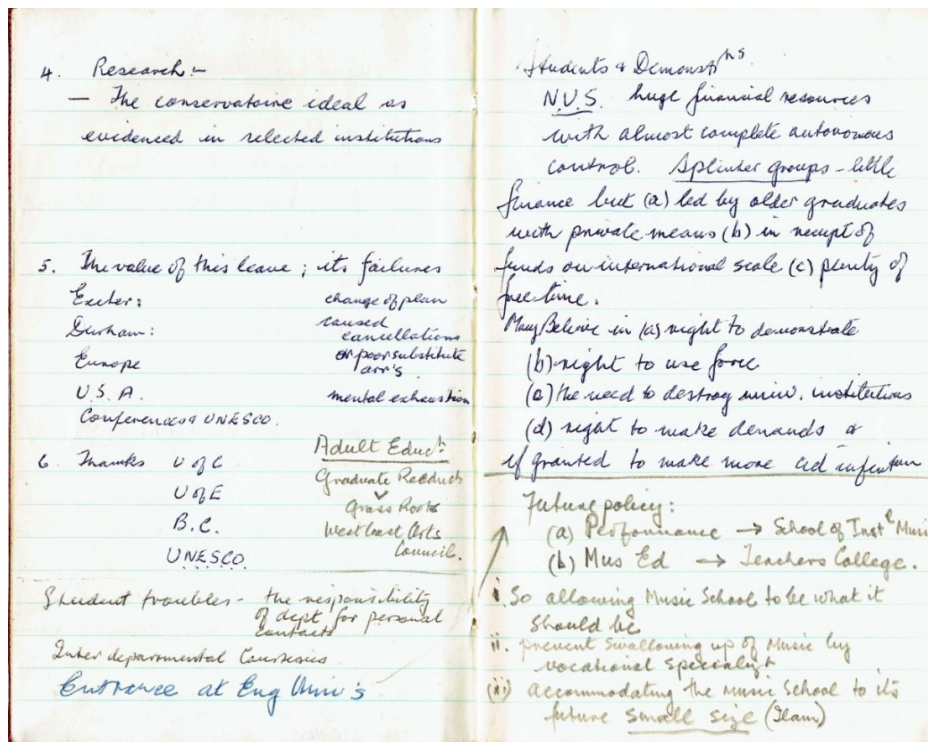


Figure 45: Ritchie's 1968 refresher leave notebook sample page 3. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

With Ritchie's forty-seventh birthday looming, the couple decided on some sightseeing and enjoyed several hours visiting and exploring around Niagara Falls before heading back to Buffalo. Ritchie attended a performance by the Juilliard Quartet while Anita relaxed with friends. By 2 October they were back in New York preparing for their return to the United Kingdom; a last shopping expedition in the city resulted in the purchase of a battery-operated tape recorder which Ritchie intended to use for rehearsals.

After spending a few days back at Brickhill on their return to Britain and a day at Cambridge where Ritchie visited the music department, they made their way to London on 9 October to meet Simon who had caught the train from Exeter. They drove on to Surrey to spend a week with Mrs Kitty Toovey (believed to be the late Michael Toovey's mother) at Lynn Cottage, Esher.¹⁶⁴ Several day trips, shopping

¹⁶⁴ 'Christian Mary Allen (1891-1985)', *Ancestry* [accessed 14 July 2019].
 <https://www.ancestry.com.au/genealogy/records/christian-mary-allen_53700351> [accessed 19 July 2019].

and sightseeing ensued; they visited Windsor Castle and the Chapel, Harrods, the London Science Museum, and Guildford, and on 14 October Ritchie interviewed applicants at New Zealand House for a position at Canterbury's Music Department. That evening he was joined by Anita and Kitty Toovey to attend a performance of the opera *Aida* at Covent Garden. It was 'a magnificent spectacle – outstanding singing by Gwyneth Jones [...] [and] a most enjoyable evening'.¹⁶⁵ Ritchie visited Trinity College two days later while the family travelled on to Sticklepath, Devon, via Exeter, staying with the Crawthas until their departure. Ritchie resumed his visit to Exeter University, meeting with the Dartington Quartet and attending a lecture by Hutchings during this time. On 27 October the family waved goodbye to the Crawthas and called in to farewell the Vice-Chancellor Dr. Llewellyn and his wife at their campus home in Exeter before making their way to Hutchings for lunch.

On 28 October at around 5.00 p.m. the family boarded the *Northern Star* at Southampton to begin the nearly six-week journey back to New Zealand. The family became unwell with a virus which spread throughout the vessel's travellers over the first week or two; however they quickly recovered and availed themselves of the various on-board activities including films, quoits, bridge, whist, table tennis, swimming, sewing group (Anita), a fancy dress parade and the library. Just as they had regularly done during their year on British soil, they attended mass which was held on Sunday evenings in the cinema lounge. In between their recreational activities Simon and Anthony continued their schoolwork facilitated by Anita throughout the trip. Although they were not acquainted with any of their fellow travellers initially, they were soon socialising with both voyagers and ship staff alike; Ritchie spent some time until the early morning hours on several occasions in the company of the ship's Captain, whiskey in hand while the conversation flowed.

The long trip entailed spells of hot, sunny weather with temperatures of up to thirty-eight degrees Celsius and calm seas interspersed with gale-force winds and

¹⁶⁵ Ritchie papers, Anita's Trip Book.

heavy swells with a relatively cool thirteen degrees. The voyage was broken with stops at various ports along the way: Biscay Bay, Las Palmas, Cape Town, Durban and Fremantle. Here, on 26 November, they disembarked to spend time with Frank and Kathleen Callaway and were given a tour of the music department at Perth's University of Western Australia. Further port stops enabled a trip to the newly opened Victoria Art Gallery in Melbourne, the Taronga Zoo in Sydney, as well as the under construction Sydney Opera House before the ship finally arrived in Wellington on Saturday 7 December.

Updates from Canterbury

During his year abroad, Ritchie was kept abreast with matters at Canterbury by Acting Head, William Hawkey and the two men corresponded regularly on various matters. Hawkey advised that he had received an offer to take up the position as Assistant Conductor for the Adelaide Singers for the first quarter of 1969.¹⁶⁶ Hawkey was very keen to accept the offer and Ritchie agreed to conduct the scheduled Harmonic's concert in March in Hawkey's absence. The appointment cemented the beginning of a relationship between Hawkey and Adelaide which likely precipitated Hawkey's departure from Canterbury in 1976 and his permanent move to South Australia. In fact, the Royal Christchurch Musical Society had by invitation performed *Belshazzar's Feast* at the Adelaide Festival in 1962 with its previous director Robert Field-Dodgson. Hawkey also informed Ritchie of a matter which was of great interest to the residents of Christchurch and of special importance to music department staff; that the construction of the long awaited Town Hall was due to start in the latter part of 1968 by successful tenderer Charles Luney. The expected completion date was two years hence although this timeframe was in fact doubled and the opening ceremony did not take place until September 1972. By the end of November 1968, Hawkey wrote to inform Ritchie of the success of Canterbury's music students and advise him of the prizes awarded: Music I – Ella Buchanan (sister to Margaret and Dorothy); Music II – Phillipa Robinson; Music III and the Michael Toovey Memorial Prize – Simon Tipping.

¹⁶⁶ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, letter from William Hawkey to Ritchie, 1968.

In late May the department had received notification of approval from the University Council for the appointment of an additional lecturer from 1969. It was possibly this position for which Ritchie was interviewing applicants at New Zealand House in October 1968. The department were advised by Council that a determining factor for their endorsement was that they had received a report from Ritchie which confirmed that Brian Pritchard would be available to return to the university. While Ritchie was obviously keen to appoint Pritchard, Hawkey expressed reservations, believing that his speciality would duplicate that of John Jennings, and that any future appointment should be in composition, specifically in the area of twentieth-century techniques and analysis. In addition, he wondered whether Jennings and John Cousins who were currently employed as assistant lecturers would be eligible to apply for the position once advertised. Cousins had especially impressed Hawkey over the year with both the development of his own individual compositional style and his well-received teaching technique.

By the end of the advertised date, there were around twelve applicants including Jennings and Cousins as well as Brian Pritchard. Ritchie reviewed the applicants and determined the first six in order of merit. Pritchard, placed at the top of his list, had an excellent academic record and his references from Nigel Fortune and Eric Mackerness were very compelling but it was his research ability which was of particular interest to Ritchie. In supporting his appointment over the other applicants he wrote: 'His social history research is potentially a major factor in N.Z. academic study [...]. Social history will represent a new line for Canterbury which will not be in conflict with other N.Z. universities'. Notwithstanding, Jennings and Cousins were elevated to the role of lecturer in 1969 and 1970 respectively and lecturer David Sell was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1969.

The resident quartet had proved satisfactory over the year although there had been some friction between the players and Maurice Till. To supplement their income, the Alberni members wanted their wives to fulfil the role of accompanist for the lunchtime concerts; however Till was adamant that his appointment covered any accompanying requirements within the department. From July to October the department searched for a resident ensemble for 1969. A letter of offer was made

to Hungarian ensemble the Weiner Quartet; however agreement of terms proved somewhat difficult.¹⁶⁷ Subsequently the Prague Quartet had indicated their availability and agreed terms in general although a formal offer was yet to be made. By mid-September news arrived that there had been a split in the group with Koníček advising that two of its members, Pribyl and Novotny were now unwilling to live in a Western country.

With the possibility of an established quartet being confirmed in time for the following year becoming increasingly unlikely, discussions centred around two musicians from the Prague group who could perform with existing staff at Canterbury. While Hawkey was dealing with this primarily from Christchurch Ritchie in the meantime wrote a letter with accompanying conditions to Mr I. Straus of Czechoslovakia to ask if he and Alexander Vectomov would be available to form a trio with Maurice Till in 1970, although no reply was forthcoming.

Nonetheless by October news had come from both halves of the Prague Quartet that they, along with two additional players which they could recommend, were happy to take up the residency in Christchurch the following year. It appeared Koníček had been less than honest with regards to Pribyl and Novotny's availability; however the deciding body, the Chamber Federation's National Executive, voted in favour of appointing Koníček's 'The New Prague Quartet'. Apparently this was not without controversy; Maurice Till purportedly approached Arthur Hilton prior to the meeting to plead the case for Novotny and Pribyl while Koníček and Co., Ritchie's preference, was endorsed by Chamber Federation member Gerald Lascelles. The quartet subsequently remained in residence at Canterbury for a three year term as The New Prague Quartet for 1969 and the Czech Quartet from 1970-1971.

¹⁶⁷ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, letter to Ritchie from Axolt Pentz, Budapest on 26 July 1968 regarding the terms of the Weiner Quartet, and requesting an additional monthly fee and recitals to make up for any shortfall they would suffer.

Till was also at odds with Canterbury staff over a row within the Civic Orchestra which was brewing: 'I just don't know what is getting into Maurice. He is lashing out in so many directions and is so misguided'.¹⁶⁸ Over the course of 1969, Till voiced concerns over the disparity between his employment terms and that of the quartet members and, in light of an impending offer of permanency being made to the quartet from 1970, the university offered Till a contract as University Pianist with similar terms. Till who had not been privy to the exact details of the quartet's terms however objected to one of the conditions namely Clause 7 which required Till to obtain permission from the Head of School – who might also ask Council for approval – to accept work outside of university duties. Additionally, if such work was undertaken during teaching time then any fee would be payable to the university.¹⁶⁹

To supplement his income Till often engaged in solo touring and accompanying work throughout the year. Ritchie referred to this in a letter to the Registrar in August, stating that he approved Till's change of employment in line with the quartet members in principle since it 'will benefit the piano students he teaches by eliminating long periods between lessons arising from term-time touring'. In February of 1970, Till was advised by the University that it was not possible to alter the terms of the new agreement which he objected to and thus his present conditions of employment would remain in place. Shortly afterwards Till tendered his resignation much to the dismay of some of the public, one of whom sent a letter to *The New Zealand Listener* weekly national magazine: 'Both as a concert pianist and as an accompanist he has an international reputation. Music-lovers will be anxious to know whether his resignation [...] means that he will not now be available to play with the Prague Quartet during their coming two winter seasons'. Ritchie, who was asked by the editor to comment so his reply could be published along with the letter, advised that no plans were yet in place for 1971 but that 'Mr Till will be joining the Czech Quartet of the University of Canterbury for the 1970 Beethoven Bicentenary Festival Concerts [...] as previously announced.'

¹⁶⁸ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, letter from University of Canterbury Registrar G.G. Turbott to Ritchie, 16 September 1968.

¹⁶⁹ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, letter from William Hawkey to Ritchie, 21 October 1968.

Advancement in University Administration

The 1970s were a particularly busy time for Ritchie as his career progressed in the university's organisational arena. Three years as Dean of the Music and Fine Arts Faculty from 1970 to 1973 along with the role of Deputy and Acting Vice-Chancellor meant a greater focus on administrative matters at Canterbury. As his involvement with ISME also increased over this period, less time was available for composition and directing. Nonetheless, he was active in his role as Head of Music so when Vice-Chancellor Neville Phillips approached department heads to suggest suitable recipients of an Honorary Degree to be awarded at the University's centenary in May 1973, Ritchie fulfilled his obligations and spent some time considering the possibilities within music. On 7 May 1971, one day before Phillips's deadline, Ritchie submitted two names: Benjamin Britten and Alex Lindsay.¹⁷⁰ It is unclear how Ritchie arrived at this selection, as aside from the performance of his works in Christchurch by various parties, Britten had no direct connection to the city or the university. As it transpired, neither man, nor in fact any musicians or artists, were amongst the seven chosen by Phillips to receive the degree at this time.

Vernon Griffiths celebrated his eightieth birthday on 22 June 1974. A special score and accompanying music recording by the University Chamber Orchestra was presented to Griffiths by Ritchie at The Union of Graduates in Music dinner which was held in his honour. The music was a set of variations, each written on a selected Griffiths theme, and arranged for string orchestra. The variations were written by a number of composers who utilised the theme to produce a self-portrait. Contributors were Professor Ian Parrott of Aberystwyth, Dr Murray Brown from Durham University, Dr Charles Walden from Auckland, and Cantabrians Clifton Cook, Peggy Hadden-Jones, John Jennings, Clare Peach, and Robert Perks. Each piece was expounded by Ritchie before the recording was played. The following year on 8 December Griffiths was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Canterbury at the Ngaio Marsh

¹⁷⁰ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, copy of letter from Ritchie to Phillips, 2 February 1971.

Theatre. Poet Allen Curnow received an Honorary Doctorate of Letters at the same ceremony.

In 1976 Ritchie once more went on refresher leave, travelling to Europe. As was his custom, he maintained contact with the University and kept abreast with music department matters. He also found time to complete three articles for the *Star* which were duly published. He corresponded with Hawkey, and later David Sell who took over as Acting Head following Hawkey's departure, on a number of matters; a proposed teaching plan for first year students' courses in 1977, student performance applications, the installation by Kenneth Aplin of the new organ, staff promotions, and lecturer Graham Hollobon's application as organist for the Cathedral. This last matter raised a number of issues and generated discussions over several weeks, all of which were proved fruitless when David Childs was unexpectedly appointed by the Cathedral Dean. Additionally, mention was made of Bill Hawkey's possible replacement at Canterbury, with Simon Tipping, David Webster and Brian Webb noted as possible applicants, none of whom were in fact appointed. It was another year before a replacement was found in Heath Lees who began in 1978 as Senior Lecturer at Canterbury. Rather unusually, Ritchie advocated a double increment salary increase in 1979 for Lees just one year after he was appointed. Obviously well-liked and admired by Ritchie, his rationale was based on his belief that Lees started at too low a level and that his contribution to Canterbury's music department was such that merited this promotion. John Cousins too received Ritchie's support in his application for promotion to Senior Lecturer at this time and both promotions were approved for the following year.

Part way through his time away Ritchie received notification that the Vice-Chancellor was in ill health. By 1977 it was determined that Phillips would not be able to return to work and in the interim Ritchie was appointed Acting Vice-Chancellor effective for that year. With Phillips's resignation from the university shortly afterwards, Ritchie made the decision to apply for the advertised position after lengthy consideration. Having worked closely alongside Phillips for several years and, more recently, experienced the role on his own, Ritchie believed that he had the expertise and vision to steer the university into a strong position over the

next five years before stepping down. He was disappointed not to succeed in his application as the university opted instead for the younger Professor of Finance, Albert (Bert) Brownlie who remained at the helm until his retirement in 1998. Nonetheless, Ritchie accepted the role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor under the Brownlie regime for a year from July 1978, assisting Brownlie with administrative support during the transitional period.¹⁷¹

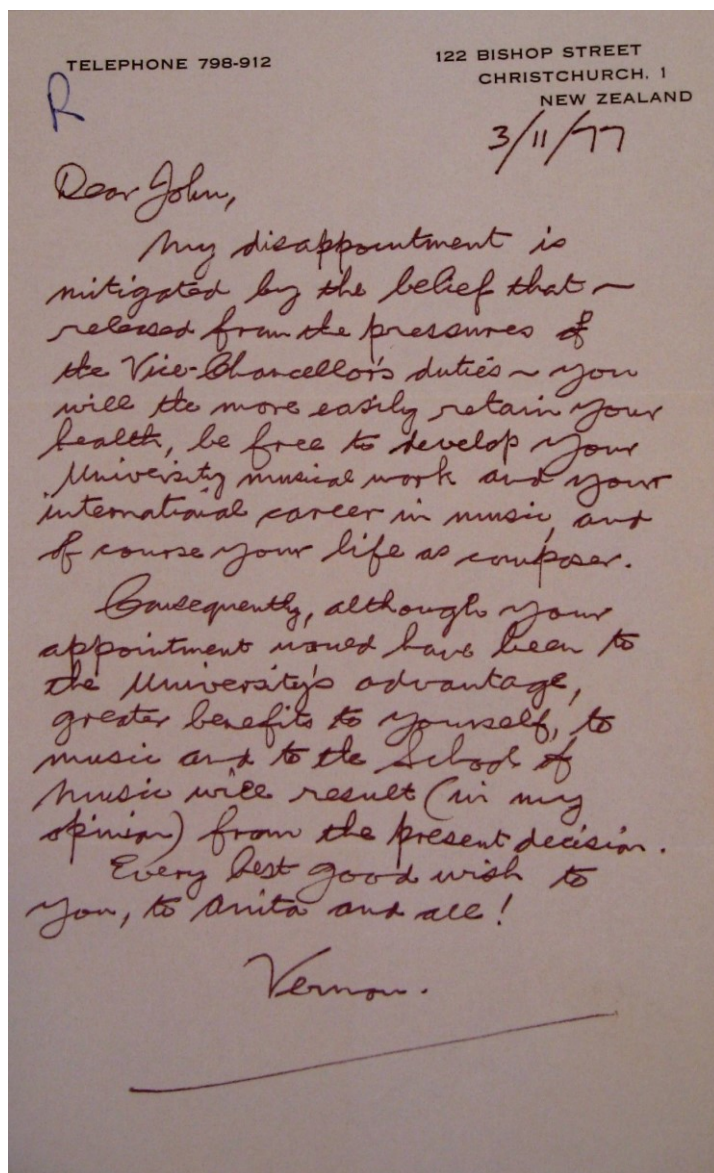


Figure 46: Letter from Vernon Griffiths to John Ritchie following Ritchie's unsuccessful application for the Vice-Chancellor role at Canterbury University. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

¹⁷¹ Ritchie papers, Confidential Staff Record Card copy.

Two important events took place in September 1977: firstly the Farewell and Honorary Degree Ceremony for Phillips on 19 September at which Ritchie, as Acting Vice-Chancellor, gave the address; and the official handover of the newly installed organ to the School of Music on 21 September. The Dr J.C. Bradshaw Memorial Organ was gifted to the university by Muriel Bradshaw in memory of her husband, the first Professor of Music at Canterbury. The Inaugural Recital given by Anthony Jennings comprised a number of seventeenth-century works together with the commissioned Chorale Prelude *Cantuariensium* which Ritchie had composed based on a Bradshaw piece. From the initial proposal to the organ's purchase, Ritchie had been closely associated with all those involved: Muriel Bradshaw, the organ builders George Croft and Son of Auckland, designers and finishers Kenneth Aplin, Bill Hawkey, Graham Hollobon and Kenneth Weir.

Muriel Bradshaw expressed her gratitude in a letter following the concert: 'Please convey my thanks to all concerned reserving a large share for yourself and Anita'. She spoke particularly appreciatively of receiving a copy of Ritchie's composition and the accompanying inscription. The organ was again celebrated on its thirtieth anniversary in 2007 with a recital, preceded by a brief tribute to Dr J.C. Bradshaw by Ritchie. Sadly in 2018 with the Music School now located in the central city and space at the university being at a premium, the organ was placed under covers so that the old recital room 205 could be used for general classes.

On 8 May 1981 Ritchie tendered his resignation, giving six months' notice, as Head of Music. Confusion appears to have surrounded this in some circles as a week later clarinettist John McCaw wrote to Ritchie to wish him well in his impending retirement and to thank him for his many kindnesses during his visits to Christchurch over the years. In fact Ritchie remained at the university for another four years until his retirement in 1985, fulfilling a variety of teaching and other duties including associate supervisor for son Anthony's PhD. Nonetheless, Ritchie's standing down as Head marked the end of an era at the school of music. A cooperative or team management model which had evolved during the 1970s

across all the university departments became the norm.¹⁷² In effect for the music department, this was the dissolution of the leadership of one person who spearheaded and was responsible for all decisions which affected the department and who also provided governance for the wider Christchurch musical community. While some may have welcomed this change, to Ritchie it was a backward step which saw the department weaken in structure and diminish both the University's and public profile from which it never recovered.

To mark Ritchie's retirement from the university and in honour of his contribution to Canterbury, a concert and ensuing party hosted by the music department took place on 26 April 1985 at the Great Hall of the Christchurch Arts Centre. It was a fitting venue for Ritchie since it had been central to many of his activities: lecturing in his early academic career, the funeral service of Sir James Hight which music he helped conduct, the scene where Ngaio Marsh's production of *Julius Caesar* played out for which he and Griffiths had composed the incidental music, the hall where many recitals including the Boyd Neel Orchestra on its British Council Tour in 1947 and later, the Civic Orchestra, took place, and where many of his own compositions were heard over the years.

The recital showcased Ritchie's works with many also conducted by the composer although his most renowned work the *Clarinet Concertino* was performed by the University Chamber Orchestra with soloist Keith Spragg under the baton of John Pattinson, and *Lord, when the sense of thy sweet grace*, sung by the University Singers was conducted by Graham Hollobon. The remainder of the programme included *Sorbonne* performed by flutist Pamela Keightley; *Arioso* from *Pisces Partita Concertante* with the Chamber Orchestra and soloist Carl Pini on violin; *Canary Wine* with the Cecilian Singers; the *Piano Concertino* performed by Maurice Till and the Chamber Orchestra; and the *Four Zhivago Songs* with soloist Judy Bellingham and accompanist John Pattinson.

¹⁷² Jennings, p. 67.

Cameo – John Pattinson

John Pattinson was appointed to the lecturing post vacated by Lloyd Peach as music lecturer at the University of Canterbury's Department of Extension Studies in 1979. English-born Pattinson learnt piano from the age of eight and was a chorister in the church choir. Having developed an interest in the organ, he was given lessons by the church organist and soon became his assistant. A gifted musician, by the age of fifteen Pattinson had been given a paid position with his first choir. With organ as his principal study he attended the Royal Manchester College of Music where his professor was Humphrey Procter-Gregg. He performed a large number of recitals around the United Kingdom but his early fascination with the instrument's big sound and varying colours produced with the stops soon gave way to a sense of irritation as the need to learn a different instrument at each venue took away the immediacy of the most important feature; the music. Pattinson maintained interest in his second study instrument the cello and enjoyed conducting and playing in orchestras.

Pattinson trained as a teacher after completing university studies at Manchester University and obtained his first teaching position as head of music at a grammar school in Derbyshire. He became heavily involved as a performer and director in the local music scene as parish organist, conductor of the operatic society and the brass band, and established a chamber orchestra. On advice from the headmaster, he applied for a superior job as Director of Music at the St Albans Boys' Grammar school to which he was appointed but was less happy there. He eventually got a job lecturing at Madeley College in Shropshire which became part of North Staffordshire Polytechnic. The University of Keele was close by and Pattinson soon became acquainted with its first Professor of Music, Peter Dickinson, who established the Ives Choir. Performing only Ives's works, Pattinson began as the choir's pianist before becoming its director. Aside from recitals, the choir performed for a variety of radio and television broadcasts. Pattinson was also involved in many other musical activities: chief examiner for London University's A level music, joint examiner and adjudicator for the Northern University, founder of the Janus Contemporary Music Ensemble, and director of the Shrewsbury Orchestral Society.

At the time of his departure he was Head of Performing Arts at the polytechnic and, like many of his contemporaries due to several mergers and large cuts being made in the tertiary sector, was applying for a number of positions around the world. He was alerted to the Canterbury University post by a friend and fellow speleology enthusiast who was a maths lecturer at Auckland University. Pattinson clearly recalled his first meeting with Canterbury's head of music whom he met soon after his arrival in the city when he wandered over to the School of Music while exploring his surroundings. He was met by a charming Ritchie and soon after, mutual respect for each other's abilities developed into a strong friendship.

Initially, Pattinson was teaching in one of two houses in Creyke Road but in time the department moved to Okeover House on the main campus.¹⁷³ Not long after his arrival he was promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer but in around 1985, Extension Studies was the first of many departments to undergo a review. This resulted in a decision to replace its academic status with administrative standing. Thus, Pattinson became head of General Studies (later Community Education) which entailed an increase of responsibility without the financial rewards; he maintained his music lecturing as well as administering the other disciplines within the department.

At the time of his appointment he was required to develop the music programme and he was expected, at least at first, to run any ideas past Ritchie as well as his own director. The university was looking for a new direction in the music courses and Pattinson was more than happy to accommodate their aims, having considerable previous experience in programming. Pattinson made every attempt to incorporate live music in the classes. When he introduced the choral music of

¹⁷³ Okeover House is a large wooden dwelling situated on Ilam Campus. It is of historical, social and heritage value and significance. It has been used for a variety of university based purposes including meetings and office space. Following the Canterbury earthquakes it became the temporary offices and rooms of the Vice-Chancellor and other Registry staff. Christchurch City Council; 'District Plan-Listed heritage place, Heritage Assessment – Statement of Significance, Heritage Item Number 300: Former Dwelling and Setting, Okeover – 90 Ilam Road, Christchurch' <<https://districtplan.ccc.govt.nz/Images/DistrictPlanImages/Statement%20of%20Significance/Christchurch/HID%20300.pdf>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

Purcell, for instance, he first requested an order of service from the Chapel Royal in England. He then liaised with Christchurch Cathedral Musical Director, David Childs (1941-1999), so that the choir performed the full Chapel Royal Service of Purcell anthems with the John Ritchie String Orchestra.

Pattinson and Ritchie met at an administrative level at academic board and school of music meetings as well as on music matters. Ritchie was a good, firm chairman and committee member who was even tempered and genial. In 1986 Pattinson was conducting the Christchurch based Amici Chamber Orchestra and enjoyed performing Ritchie's *Clarinet Concertino* and later *Aquarius: Suite No. 2 for String Orchestra*. Pattinson found his string and choral music exceptionally well-written and his scores meticulously edited and clearly notated. His music was easy to conduct because, Pattinson believed, Ritchie could write from the conductor's and the performer's perspective and there was no ambiguity. If Pattinson was puzzled by anything in the score and needed an explanation, it was immediately forthcoming.

In 1988 Pattinson became the Jubilate Singers' Director, a position which he held for eighteen years until 2006. It was in this capacity that he advanced Ritchie's choral music, performing many of Ritchie's choral works including the song cycle *Winter and Rough Weather* numerous times and recording it in 2004 for a Ritchie only music CD of the same name. The recording had its own challenges related to its chosen location; held in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Barbadoes Street, a main and busy one-way thoroughfare in Christchurch, it only took one revving motor vehicle to necessitate a restart of proceedings.

In fact, Pattinson enjoyed the work enormously and performed it with a number of choirs including the Ashburton based Mid Canterbury Choir. In Pattinson's view, the work is 'well-conceived from a practical view but rhythmically and harmonically it can be tricky'. This made it particularly challenging for the less advanced Ashburton group but they achieved a creditable performance and it was greatly enjoyed by both singers and listeners.

Pattinson appreciated Ritchie's attention to detail in his composing, particularly the care Ritchie took in his choice of words, leaving aside those which either did not lend themselves to music or which he believed the writer would not want set to music. His admiration for Ritchie's works extended to the pithy Christmas card carols which Pattinson enjoyed receiving and which he persuaded Ritchie to have a selection of included on the CD.

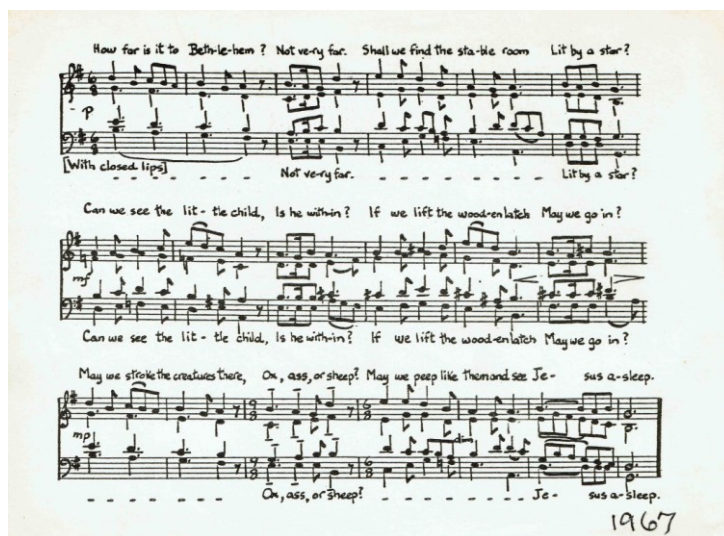


Figure 47: John and Anita Ritchie's Christmas card 1967.
Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

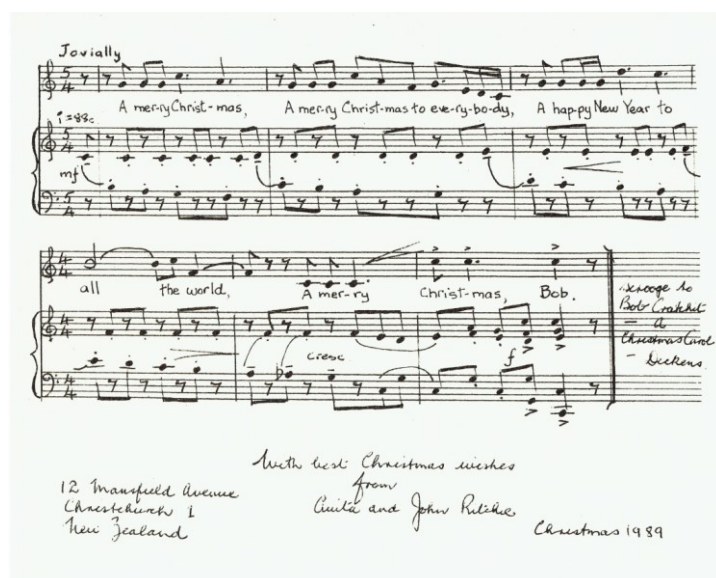


Figure 48: John and Anita Ritchie's Christmas card 1989.
Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

His setting of the mass *Missa in Sanctissimi Pauli Apostoli Honorem*, written for Pattinson and the Jubilate Singers and which was also recorded for the CD is, according to Pattinson, unconventional writing for a mass: ‘It is a beautiful setting [,,,] [with] some spine-chilling harmonies [...]. Every note had been thought out carefully to fit the natural rhythm of the words [and] falls naturally to the right form of accentuation.’

Release from Academic Duties

On 3 May 1985, the Dean of Music and Fine Arts spoke at the Faculty meeting of Ritchie’s influence and involvement with music as well as his talents as a musician and administrator.¹⁷⁴ A motion was then carried in which it was hoped that Ritchie would continue ‘in the full enjoyment of his great love: music O Calliope, tibi bono fruit maxime’. In reply, Ritchie spoke of his appreciation of the opportunities that had been afforded to him in New Zealand and that he fully supported a body which was able to communicate the artist’s view of university matters. Lastly, he said that he was not retiring, rather he was changing direction. At the end of the meeting, attendees were invited to a farewell function for Ritchie at the staff club.

Among the many letters of good wishes for his retirement Ritchie received, several were from individuals including past and current students, and a number represented organisations; the National Music Council of New Zealand Inc., the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra’s Assistant General Manager Peter Averi, Richard Charteris from The University of Sydney’s Music Department, the President of NZSME David Naylor, the Christchurch Clef Club, Bill Hawkey from the Canberra School of Music, Clifton Cook, Margaret Austin, Garth Turbott, Jane Herbison, the University Grants Committee, and Professor Drummond of the University of Otago on behalf of all four university music departments in appreciation to Ritchie as Founding Chairman of their biannual meetings and of his ability to foster a close relationship between the four schools. Finally, such

¹⁷⁴ Ritchie papers, Correspondence 1980s folder, minutes Friday 3 May.

was the regard that he was held in by the music student population, a cake and champagne was presented to him by the students at the close of his last lecture.

Ritchie's retirement, together with that of Chemistry Professor John (Jack) Vaughan, was featured in the University's *Chronicle* magazine dated 17 May 1985 soon after. Headlined 'Two Stalwart Professors Retire', the articles took up just over two of the eight-page volume. Ritchie's wide ranging contribution to the University, the community, and to music education on the world stage was acknowledged as was his geniality and generosity:

Professor Ritchie is in sharp contrast to the popular notion of professor of music. His interest in sport in general and golf in particular brought him a wide range of friends in all walks of life [...]. He became as well known at Lancaster Park, Waitikiri [and] the Carlton as on the conductor's podium. His ready friendship [...] encouraged generations of students, competition entrants, choirs, bands, orchestras and concert performers to give of their best'.

In early June, Ritchie received notification that the University had accorded him the title of Professor Emeritus. As the year drew to a close, the end of an era of music at Canterbury was marked further with the passing of Vernon Griffiths on 23 November at the age of 91. The Requiem Mass and service in honour of Griffiths's life took place three days later at St Marys Catholic Church. Fittingly, Ritchie oversaw the music for the service, all of which was composed or arranged by Griffiths, while Douglas Sloane and Robert Perks delivered the readings.

Chapter 5: Views on Curriculum

I have always been something of a dogmatist as a teacher and my impression, based on observation of many music depts. most of which are similar in scope if smaller in size than ours, is that I will return to N.Z. convinced more than ever that the dogmatic approach is the best especially where it has to do with the undergraduate mind.

The advantages of this are two fold: first a thorough systematic coverage of a given (if prescribed) area is made; second, the student mind is challenged to rebel, but the challenge is oblique and it is only apparent to the above-average student. In other words it strikes where it should – in the minds of those qualified to rebel in the field of original thought.¹⁷⁵

John Ritchie, 1968.

Visit to USA September 1956 – February 1957: Refresher leave to visit educational institutions, observe musical activities and developments and meet with musicians

In September 1955 Ritchie wrote to the University's Registrar and requested Refresher Leave to visit Great Britain, returning via the USA. His stated aim was to renew contacts made during the war years and to examine the various music fields of composition, harmony, orchestration and musicianship at a range of universities and academies. Additionally, he hoped to study orchestration and composition under Julius Harrison and Dr. William Lovelock. Following a trip to New Zealand by Dr Robert (Bob) Yingling the previous year, Ritchie had received an invitation to visit the University of Connecticut to observe teaching practices and to conduct some lectures which he also hoped to incorporate during his leave.¹⁷⁶ The intended visit to Britain did not take place; instead a revised plan to travel to the States only was made. This included a visit to the Music Educators National Conference in Washington D.C. with a view to attend a selection of the

¹⁷⁵ Ritchie papers, Macmillan Brown folder.

¹⁷⁶ Yingling was lecturer in music education at Canterbury University College under a Fulbright lectureship in 1954; *Connecticut Campus*, 8 April 1954, p. 1.

organisation's Golden Anniversary sessions, and an extended time spent in Connecticut. From there he planned to visit a variety of universities and he was particularly keen to discuss the idea of introducing conservatory training at Canterbury with his American counterparts. On Saturday, 22 September 1956, Ritchie left Wellington on the *Rangitoto* to begin a five month stay in the United States of America.¹⁷⁷

Ritchie took full advantage of the change to his schedule by spending his time observing and comparing American music and its people and their views with that of the European tradition he was most familiar with. As well as the University of Connecticut, he spent time with staff at Hartford, Harvard, Yale, Smith College, Juilliard, the Eastman School of Music (University of Rochester, New York), and the Department of Music Education in Philadelphia. Fleeting visits were also paid to New York University, Wagner College, University of Michigan, University of Illinois, Northwestern University of Utah, Mills College, and the University of California at Berkeley. Along the way he met and conversed with a large number of musicians and academics with whom he entered into discussions and debated topics, and was offered opinions, suggestions and advice.

This topic summarises Ritchie's findings as recorded in his trip diary and letters to Anita. Together with meetings and conversations with notable musicians, themes include American culture, institutions and facilities, music education in schools, degree curriculum, programmes and performance, and composition. General commentary and views are those noted by Ritchie and compiled by the researcher into groupings of subject matter. Where possible, factual information has been verified from other sources and cited with footnotes.

Ritchie's early days in Connecticut were spent meeting a number of musical figures and making arrangements to visit institutions, music classes and seminars, recitals and other musical activities. A number of introductions took place with Yingling at the University of Connecticut and staff were welcoming and helpful.

¹⁷⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie refresher notebook 1967-1968.

Ritchie was especially drawn to staff member and choral director, Smitty.¹⁷⁸

Smitty was an accomplished wind player and he offered Ritchie instruction on playing and teaching clarinet. These lessons were a most enjoyable feature of his time in Connecticut. Aside from the element of fun which permeated the lessons, Ritchie found Smitty to be an excellent teacher. He offered sound technical advice on such subjects as teaching beginners, handling of the break, vigour of fingering, and two types of tonguing.

Notable connections were also formed at a New England Musicological Society meeting soon after Ritchie's arrival. These included Hungarian-born musicologist and viola player, Egon Kenton (1891-1987), Associate Professor at Connecticut University. Ritchie was particularly impressed with Kenton's address on his specialist subject Giovanni Gabrieli and was keen to enter into a discussion with him. Kenton had been successful as a violist in ensembles in his home country, playing with the Waldbauer String and the Hungarian Quartets prior to his musicological career, and was a great admirer of Beecham whom he had worked under. Ritchie wondered if Kenton might consider undertaking an Australasian lecturing tour in the near future but there is no evidence that this took place.

Arthur Merritt (1902-1998), Professor of Music at Harvard University, Yale musicologist Professor Leo Schrade (1903-1964), and Dr John E. Hassen, a musicologist from Boston University all offered their assistance to Ritchie and suggested he join them at Harvard for a further society meeting the following month. There he was introduced to David McAllester (1916-2006) of Wesleyan College, Oxford Fellow Egon Wellesz (1885-1974), and Harvard Professor and Faculty Dean, Randall Thompson (1899-1984). Ritchie also met French Canadian Gaston Allaire (1916-2011) in one of Hassen's classes. Allaire had completed a Master of Arts in music theory and composition at Connecticut and was studying

¹⁷⁸ Ritchie only refers to this person as Smitty. The researcher has not been able to find out Smitty's full name. An archival photograph of the Carollers, the group Smitty conducted at Connecticut University, identifies a man in the photograph as Smitty. UConn Library Archives and Special Collections, 'Carollers', *Nutmeg* (1958)
<<https://archives.lib.uconn.edu/islandora/object/20002%3A859973162#page/160/mode/1up/search/Smitty>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

for a PhD in Musicology at Boston while working as an organist-choirmaster for a Catholic church.

American Culture and Music

Ritchie's early impressions of the States could not help but be comparative ones. He was struck with the urbanization of American society, its vastly more advanced communication and transportation, a much greater travelling population, and the speed of the American speech. There were marked differences between New Zealand and American universities. An interview of Ritchie by Judy Young for an article in the daily campus newspaper entitled 'Visitor From New Zealand Makes Musical Comparison' provides an overview of Ritchie's initial observations.¹⁷⁹ He was fascinated to find that the comprehensive campus comprised not only educational facilities but also a daily newspaper, radio station, movie facilities, and a shopping centre.

The music department's service was exceptional and extended to the entire community. He responded favourably to the relationship between students and academic staff during classes which was informal and relaxed, the antithesis of Canterbury at that time. He was less taken with American audiences' propensity to talk during recitals and further, astonished that this was tolerated by conductors. Such behaviour would have been severely frowned on in New Zealand.

Ritchie's first sense of American music culture was that which was conveyed by George Buelow (1929-2009), although similar sentiments were later aired by a number of musical figures including Eugene Selhorst (1914-1972) who headed the Division of Graduate Professional Studies at Eastman, and Dr Walter Ihrke

¹⁷⁹ Ritchie papers, USA diary, p. 101, article and photograph loose inside pp. 100-01.
Judy Young, 'Visitor From New Zealand Makes Musical Comparison', *Connecticut Daily Campus*, 6 December 1956, p. 3.
<<https://collections.ctdigitalarchive.org/islandora/object/20002%3A860358109>> [accessed 21 July 2019].

(1908-1992), head of music at the University of Connecticut.¹⁸⁰ The rather pessimistic view was that America was a nation of inactivity whose inhabitants would rather watch television and listen to the radiogram than participate in serious music. Television was considered an educative force but was also deemed to be a contributing factor in a lack of concentration amongst young people, many of whom were thought to exhibit increasingly delinquent behaviours. This conduct was believed to stem from a psychological philosophy which emphasised freedom for children. This differed to New Zealand's child-rearing methods in which parents ultimately maintained authority over their offspring who were consequently generally obedient and respectful of others. The behaviour of children in America was often a topic of concern and discussed amongst music specialists. Many believed that the engagement of youth in singing and playing instruments would counter juvenile delinquency and provide positive outcomes for individuals and communities.

George Buelow was Assistant Editor of the *Music Educators Journal* a publication of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), (now the National Association for Music Education (NAfME)). Ritchie was given a tour of the brand new offices of MENC at 1201 Sixteenth Street and provided with an abundance of associated conference material.¹⁸¹ Buelow was a musicologist with a penchant for eighteenth-century music, and a composer although his writing was of a more modern style, evident in a recording of his Sonata for Violin and Piano which Buelow played to Ritchie during their time spent together as they discussed

¹⁸⁰ A summary outlining the formation and early development of the music department including the appointment of Ihrke at the University of Connecticut (UConn) is on the digital UCONN School of Fine Arts timeline: *From Cadet Bands to the Department of Music* <<http://fineart.dev.uconn.edu/sfatimeline/tag/music/>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

¹⁸¹ MENC had recently moved from offices in Chicago. 'Front Matter', *Music Educators Journal*, 43, no. 1, (September-October 1956), p. 14 <www.jstor.org/stable/3388318>.

music.¹⁸² According to Buelow knowledge of English music in the United States was scant. Aside from *Land of Hope and Glory* and *Enigma*, Elgar's compositions were almost entirely unknown. There was some familiarity with the work of Vaughan Williams and William Walton, in particular Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, but John Ireland's music did not feature at all in the repertoire. Similarly, reporting of British music news was limited. Ritchie learned of Gerald Finzi's death in late November, two months after he had passed away.

As well as documenting his trip and observations, Ritchie responded to letters from Anita and Margaret Nielsen in particular and wrote to Vernon Griffiths and others at home throughout his time away. He drafted and typed up a number of articles for the *Press*, and jotted down thoughts from his reading of various music texts. Ritchie considered that American-born Archibald T. Davison (1883-1961) and Thomas W. Surette (1861-1941) had provided the greatest influence on American music. Surette began the Summer School of Music at Concord in 1915 primarily to provide a forum where educators could learn methods to improve music teaching, and from which the Concord Series was then launched.¹⁸³ Davison (and later Augustus Zanig) worked with Surette to produce these publications of educational music and books on musical pedagogy. These provided material for the summer school attendees as well as being more widely distributed. As the Harvard Glee Club's first conductor, Davison's influence on

¹⁸² Ritchie documents his name as George Below but the researcher believes this to be George J. Buelow. In 1955 Buelow had recently returned from study on a Fulbright Exchange Fellowship in Hamburg and was working as an editor for two music education journals while completing a doctoral dissertation. The name of the editor and assistant of the *Music Educators Journal* was mostly recorded in each publication but was omitted from the September-October 1955 to the January 1960 issue. These dates coincide exactly with the time of Buelow's stated employment as editor and just prior to the completion of his dissertation and subsequent appointment at California University. Buelow went on to have a distinguished career as an academic at a number of universities including California, Kentucky, Rutgers and Indiana. His research, centred mainly on seventeenth and eighteenth-century composers and music, is published in several books and journals including one hundred articles for *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980). George J. Buelow, 'An Autobiography' in *Festa Musicologica: Essays in Honor of George J. Buelow*, ed. by Thomas J. Mathiesen and Benito V. Rivera (New York: Pendragon Press, 1995), pp. 489-503.

¹⁸³ Concord, Massachusetts, Concord Free Public Library, Special Collections, 'Thomas Whitney Surette and Concord Summer School of Music Collection, 1846-1981'
<https://concordlibrary.org/special-collections/fin_aids/surette> [accessed 14 July 2019].

choral repertoire, performance, touring education, and composing is well-documented.¹⁸⁴ He was also a prolific arranger with numerous publications, and authored several books on conducting, choral composing, and music history.

Ritchie enjoyed perusing and reflecting on Davison's book *Music Education in America* not least because Ritchie considered that while its 1926 publication date was not particularly recent, its sentiments could readily apply to 1956 New Zealand. Fortunately for American musical society, many of Davison's concerns had been addressed in the thirty years since. Principally, Davison had written that a love of music which stemmed from an intelligent understanding of and participation in music, and which carried on into adult life, was the benchmark by which one could measure the success of music education. Whilst this continuity existed in other disciplines, it was sadly lacking in music and, according to Ritchie's notes, Davison considered that this had caused the lack of cohesion amongst the youth of the nation: 'We are a blend of so many races and possess such a diversity of inheritance [...]. No English solidity or French vivacity'.¹⁸⁵

Institutions and their Facilities

Ritchie became immersed in musical life at Connecticut both at the University and in the wider community. He attended various music classes and activities, participated in discussions with staff and students and attended music recitals, both amateur and professional. On staffing matters he learned that the appointment of permanent academic staff at universities was often a protracted affair: annual contracts for staff as 'demonstrators' could be offered and renewed for up to eight successive years. If the person had not been promoted to Assistant Professor or tenure granted during this time then their employment would cease. For those who did make the grade there was an intermediary promotional step to Associate Professor before a Professorship was offered.

¹⁸⁴ Harvard Glee Club Foundation, 'Archibald T. "Doc" Davison', <<https://hgcfoundation.org/archibaldtdocdavison>> [accessed 19 July 2019].
William A. Weber, 'Archibald T. Davison: Faith in Good Music' in *The Harvard Crimson* <<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1961/2/17/archibald-t-davison-faith-in-good/>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

¹⁸⁵ Ritchie papers, USA diary, p. 156.

Performance facilities at Connecticut allowed for both intimate and larger events with a small four hundred capacity concert hall situated below the University's main three thousand six hundred-seat venue. Ritchie was particularly impressed with the auditorium's acoustics and noted its suitability for his hometown Christchurch. The need for a specialised concert facility in the city, long recognized particularly since the Centennial Celebrations in 1950, had recently been discussed amongst musicians and local organisations such as the Canterbury Progress League and Junior Chamber.¹⁸⁶

The vast libraries and the availability of music resources such as scores and recordings at Connecticut were astonishing. Its Audio-Visual Centre which serviced both the university and neighbouring schools was typical of its type. It comprised fifteen rooms including two viewing rooms, and was supported by a staff of ten. The unit housed a large supply of tapes and films with the accompanying playing equipment, tape recorders and projectors, as well as public address systems and transcription players.

Further afield, Harvard University was perhaps more striking than Ritchie had anticipated. The campus which catered for around twelve thousand students was enormous. Most of its buildings were four or five stories high with additional basement space below ground. The vast main library was magnificent, the style of which was reminiscent of the New Zealand Houses of Parliament with its grand entranceway and imposing pillars, marble steps and paved floors.¹⁸⁷ To use a

¹⁸⁶ The first Town Hall Promotion Committee meeting was held on 26 February 1957 and a Sponsoring Committee was formed several months later. In March 1958 the Town Hall Promotion Inc. name was adopted and the first Officers led by President J. L. Hay and Committee were ratified. The thirty-seven personnel on the committee included E.R. Dodgson, Athol Mann, Ngaio Marsh, and Professor Vernon Griffiths. W. J. A. Brittenden, *A Dream Come True: The Christchurch Town Hall* (Christchurch: Christchurch Town Hall Committee, 1972), pp. 24-25.

¹⁸⁷ Note that this was pre-Beehive era. Photographs of the two buildings show a marked resemblance; Gordon Haws, *Parliament Buildings, Wellington* (2005) <<https://www.flickr.com/photos/22960583@N08/4484506063>> [accessed 21 July 2019]; *Harvard University Widener Library Exterior Front* (c. 1915) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:HarvardUniversity_WidenerLibrary_ExteriorFront_c1915.jpg> [accessed 21 July 2019].

favourite Americanism, the library was ‘fabulous’.¹⁸⁸ With a particular task in mind Ritchie searched out the catalogue room, alone similar in size to the top floor of Canterbury’s main library, and located the card for Vernon Griffiths’s book *An Experiment in School Music Making*.

Harvard’s Music Department Library, too, was extraordinary. Recently built, it was spacious and sumptuous and boasted an extensive array of books, scores and records as well as reading rooms and listening booths housed over three floors. It contained the complete works of the well-known composers such as Byrd, Purcell, C.P.E. Bach and many more together with the madrigalists Schütz, Monteverde, and Gabrieli. There were countless text books as well as all of the standard orchestral works and hundreds of others. The basement floor held miniature scores in sets of twenty-five, a vast number of records, and twelve turntables with headphones attached for students’ use.¹⁸⁹

Ritchie considered the music library at Yale, although not modern, the equal of Harvard’s. The John Herrick Jackson Music Library was conveniently situated across the road from the music building, Stoeckel Hall, and underneath the Sprague Memorial Hall, a venue where student recitals took place. Gustave Jacob Stoeckel was Yale’s first appointed instructor of music in 1855. He subsequently campaigned for the creation of a music department, becoming Professor of Music in 1890.¹⁹⁰ The library held an immense collection of the great composers which included the total output of Schütz, Schein and Scheidt. A locked room of only first editions was part of the fifty thousand volume collection.

¹⁸⁸ Ritchie papers, letter to Anita, 26 October 1956, p. 3.

¹⁸⁹ In 2008 Ritchie was pleased to learn that the scores of a number of his works were housed at Harvard: both the Novello and Promethean Edition of *Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra*; *Suite No. 1 for String Orchestra*; *Aquarius: Suite No. 2 for String Orchestra*; *Snow Goose* for flute and orchestra; and *Snow Goose* for flute and piano. John Ritchie, *Harvard Library: Hollis* <https://hollis.harvard.edu/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=01HVD_ALMA212102571630003941&context=L&vid=HVD2&lang=en_US&search_scope=default_scope&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=everything&query=creator,exact,Ritchie,%20John,%201921-.AND&facet=domain,include,Harvard%20Core&mode=advanced&offset=0> [accessed 19 July 2019].

¹⁹⁰ Yale School of Music, ‘History’, <<https://music.yale.edu/about/history/>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

Ritchie also paid a visit to the *Edwin A. Fleisher Music Collection*, an impressive anthology of orchestral music housed in the enormous Free Library of Philadelphia. Ritchie was given a tour of the facility by the curator Theodore A. Seder. There were no less than five copyists at work, a binding room, photographic plant, and a microfilm unit which was used for the preservation of valuable scores. Seder informed Ritchie that there were few gaps in the collection which boasted the score and parts of ‘every worthwhile orchestral work in existence’ including chamber ensembles and small orchestral works.¹⁹¹ Countries outside of the States including New Zealand could borrow out-of-print works with the proviso that they adhere to copyright laws.¹⁹² The library was keen to receive works of New Zealand composers and Seder provided Ritchie with the address for these to be sent.¹⁹³ Scores and parts on transparent sheets were preferred but they would also accept copies in Indian ink.¹⁹⁴

In mid-December 1956 Ritchie travelled the sixty-five miles from Connecticut to Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. An elite women’s liberal arts college with an annual fee per student of two thousand five hundred dollars, the college current enrolment was two thousand three hundred.¹⁹⁵ The four-storied brick music building housed a small three hundred and fifty seat auditorium and a large library which included one room for Alfred Einstein’s publications and researches.¹⁹⁶ The College’s large main auditorium situated elsewhere on the

¹⁹¹ Ritchie papers, USA diary, p. 123.

¹⁹² The Free Library of Philadelphia, *About the Fleisher Collection – FY2017* (2016) <<https://libwww.freelibrary.org/assets/pdf/fleisher/fleisher-conditions-of-loan.pdf>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

¹⁹³ Ritchie noted this as ‘Theodore A. Seder, Curator, The Edwin A. Fleisher Music Collection, Free Library of Phila, Logan Square, Phila. 3. Pa.’ USA diary, p. 124.

¹⁹⁴ The library currently holds scores of two Ritchie works: his *Concertino for Clarinet and Strings* (Novello, 1963) and *Suite for Strings* (1956). The Free Library of Philadelphia, *John Ritchie* <<https://know.freelibrary.org/Author/Home?author=Ritchie%2C+John%2C+1921->>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

¹⁹⁵ The average annual income for men in the US in 1956 was around three thousand six hundred dollars. ‘Income of Men at All-Time High in 1956’, *Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce: Current Population Reports*, June 1957, 2. <<https://www2.census.gov/prod2/popscan/p60-025.pdf>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

¹⁹⁶ Alfred Einstein (1880-1952) taught Music History at Smith College from 1939-1950. ‘Alfred Einstein: German-American Musicologist and Critic’, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Alfred-Einstein>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

campus could accommodate an audience of two thousand three hundred. Music teaching and learning facilities comprised thirty practice rooms, each with a grand piano; ten teaching rooms with either one or two upright pianos; two large lecture halls; and several smaller rooms for general instruction.

Kilbourne Hall at The Eastman School of Music was one of the finest smaller venues Ritchie encountered. With seating for around five hundred, it boasted a moveable orchestral pit, a baroque organ, and technical equipment to record every recital. Larger events catering for audiences up to three thousand five hundred and over two hundred and fifty performers were hosted at Eastman Theatre. The school's six hundred students were well-catered for in terms of facilities with over one hundred practice rooms, several listening rooms, a student lounge and café, and the extensive Sibley Music Library which housed books, records and music scores.

A brief visit was also made to the University of Michigan near the end of Ritchie's stay in the States. The campus was huge with around twenty-three thousand students of whom six hundred were music students catered for by seventy-six staff. Ritchie had little time to observe the department's procedures but he did meet the Professor of Music Education, Allen Britton (1914-2003) who looked after him during his visit. Britton was a proponent of the study of music education and was on the editorial board and publications committee of the *Music Educators Journal* as well as founding editor of the *Journal of Research in Music Education*. Ritchie also managed a short discussion with J.A. Westrup, an Oxford music professor on sabbatical who had accepted a post in musicology at Michigan for the semester.¹⁹⁷ Their conversation centred mainly on education and unlike Ritchie's American colleagues, Westrup revealed his knowledge of Griffiths's book without any prompting from Ritchie. He was also keenly interested in the

¹⁹⁷ Ritchie papers, letter to Anita, 26 January 1957. This is assumed to be Jack Allan Westrup (1904-1974), later Sir Jack (1961). 'Westrup: Music Talk Scheduled', *Michigan Daily*, 19 March 1957, p. 2 <<https://digital.bentley.umich.edu/midaily/mdp.39015071756410/276>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

conservatorium training proposal at Canterbury and not only approved of it but thought it worthy of consideration at Oxford.

Conservatorium Training

A range of views were expressed during discussions with various music department staff, and differences between private and public institutions also emerged. In broad terms American institutions were either strongly centred on the Music Education movement which had its roots in the general education scheme or were conservatoire-based colleges and models of the European and British Conservatories. Nonetheless Ritchie saw that each utilised aspects of the other's approach. The University of Connecticut, for example, was fundamentally based in music education leadership but also offered good individual training; on the other hand The Hartt School, the performing arts conservatory of the University of Hartford in Connecticut, had recently introduced music education into its syllabus and degree structure. Despite the tug-of-war mentality that appeared to exist between the two models, Ritchie believed that the inroads currently being achieved in schools and which was fostered by MENC, meant that music education would emerge as the ruling force in music.

Conservatorium or applied training was not offered at Harvard. Walter Piston believed that many music departments had been completely overtaken by applied music and cautioned Ritchie likewise about introducing it at Canterbury. Professor of Music, G. Wallace ('Woody') Woodworth (1902-1969), agreed, saying that such a move at Harvard would open the floodgates to an additional five hundred students. This would compromise current class sizes and engulf the current academic work.¹⁹⁸ Additionally it would duplicate courses at nearby Boston University, and the New England and Boston Conservatories which provided these options for students.

¹⁹⁸ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, senior classes were limited to between twenty and thirty students.

Music education too was viewed at Harvard as a separate entity from academic teaching and associated university degrees. It was thought that this should sit solely within teacher training and its related qualifications. There was even some opposition to the inclusion of musicology within the degree structure. The emphasis at Harvard was placed on performing ability and theory. Staff were strong advocates of a MusD for composers only and whilst approving of Canterbury's tripartite structure of MusB, BA and Education Diploma in Music, (and MA) for composers, musicologists and teachers respectively, they advised against these being available to any candidates of the proposed conservatorium training scheme.

David Kraehenbuehl (1923-1997), School of Music lecturer in form and advanced composition at Yale, also cautioned Ritchie on proceeding in the manner proposed. While he understood the department's aims he did not believe that a university ought to provide such a facility. He considered that the dual role would be difficult to maintain on an equal basis and that conservatory training would quickly overwhelm the core function. Ritchie countered much of his argument by explaining that New Zealand suffered from a shortage of orchestral players simply because it lacked a conservatory. Nonetheless Kraehenbuehl was adamant that such a scheme would ultimately fail and suggested that the government should fund a National Conservatory instead.

Ritchie was introduced to Yale's Music Dean, Luther Noss (1907-1995), and met band conductor and the excellent clarinettist, Keith Wilson (1916-2013). Ritchie liked Noss enormously, finding him full of energy and receptive to new ideas.¹⁹⁹ Noss, like Kraehenbuehl, was in favour of a separate national centre but offered advice for Ritchie if Canterbury should proceed with the proposal in its current state. In particular, he strongly urged against a degree solely in instrumental playing. He believed that in America the Bachelor of Music had been weakened due to the variety of subjects this encompassed – music education, applied music, theory, composition and musicology – together with the large number of mediocre

¹⁹⁹ Ritchie papers, USA Letters, letter to Anita and Elizabeth, 30 November 1956.

conservatories available to students. Noss advised Ritchie to visit Ann Arbor to meet Earl Moore at the University of Michigan, and offered to provide introductions to the Manhattan School of Music, Juilliard, Eastman and Illinois to discuss the matter further.

On the other hand, the Dean of Music at Juilliard, Mark Schubart, was wholly supportive of the proposal of conservatory training at Canterbury and appreciated the staff's rationale behind it. He suggested that rather than taking a cautious approach to the scheme which Ritchie talked of, the music department ought to purposefully aim to enrol as many students as possible at the earliest level so they could learn what is involved in full musical training. From these large numbers, the selection of suitable conservatory candidates could then be made.

Ritchie was introduced to the New England Conservatory's president, Dr Harrison Keller (1883-1979), by Demeter Zachareff (1884-1978).²⁰⁰ Zachareff was a concert promoter and manager, and husband of the conservatory's voice teacher Gladys Miller (1902-1979). Zachareff was of great help to Ritchie throughout his trip to Boston, showing him the city and accompanying him to various institutions and recitals.²⁰¹ The Conservatory in Boston, Massachusetts was predominantly a conservatorium for professional musicians although music education and theory tuition was also valued: 'Throughout the curriculum, emphasis is placed upon training music educators and supervisors who will be skilled as teachers and who will also be performing musicians'.²⁰²

Not surprisingly, given New England's focus on the performing musician, a much more enthusiastic and positive view was proffered. Keller, who had discussed such matters previously with past Professor of Music at Auckland University, Horace Hollinrake (1904-1955), was particularly interested to hear how

²⁰⁰ Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives, 'The Stanger Chamber Orchestra: twenty-five virtuosi of the Boston Symphony Orchestra', *Boston Symphony Orchestra Programs, 1957-1959, Subscription, Series 77*, p. 175
<<https://archive.org/details/bostonsymphonysub5758bost/page/174>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

²⁰¹ Ritchie papers, USA Letters, letter to Anita, 12 November 1956.

²⁰² Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 61.

conservatory training was progressing in New Zealand. He was somewhat disappointed in the decentralization of teaching which was taking place: 'To him, the corporate life of a conservatory is one of its clearest advantages'.²⁰³ Nonetheless the proposed structure for Canterbury was overall met with approval. Keller who was president of the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) also suggested that Ritchie might wish to write to NASM's secretary and founder, Burnett Tuthill, to request copies of their latest bulletins.²⁰⁴ These would provide information on degree structure, standards and curriculum at American institutions.

Similarly New England's Dean, Chester W. Williams, showed particular interest in the Conservatory training plan, even going as far as to suggest that he could personally recommend and guarantee suitable teachers to Ritchie for consideration. Zachareff too was keen to offer advice, cautioning that such a venture should begin slowly and develop over time. He was especially interested in voice tuition and he recommended that only those teachers who were also accomplished pianists should be engaged.

Ritchie spent an afternoon with Albert Alphin (1900-1973), Director of the Boston Conservatory. Alphin had been instrumental in ensuring the Conservatory's success in performing arts for the region when it faced uncertainty in the 1930s. Alphin had amalgamated his own successful music instruction studio with the conservatory and over the next ten years was influential in the incorporation of both a theatre and dance programme at the conservatory.²⁰⁵ Ritchie was shown aspects of the conservatory's teaching methods and classes, and noted particularly that there were some distinct advantages to its relatively small size. There was a limit of four students to orchestration classes and the ensembles received excellent training under the leadership of a Mr Gregorian.

²⁰³ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 62.

²⁰⁴ 'Memphis Composers: Burnet Tuthill, 1888-1982', *The University of Memphis Libraries* <<http://libguides.memphis.edu/c.php?g=94312&p=1614766>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

²⁰⁵ Boston Conservatory at Berkeley, 'History' <<https://bostonconservatory.berklee.edu/about/history>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

Ritchie was able to hear some of these groups rehearse: a string quartet, piano trio and piano quintet. All performed to an exceptional standard.

Staff at Connecticut were correspondingly supportive of conservatory training at Canterbury. Indeed, several of the staff meetings Ritchie attended were very much focussed on discussions around the establishment of a College of Music at Connecticut which would offer the Bachelor and Master of Music degrees. Like Yale, concerns were raised as to whether existing graduates around the world could in fact make a living concertizing. Colleagues were keen to offer their thoughts on Canterbury's plan as described by Ritchie. Ihrke suggested that violin, viola and cello could initially be offered. He also thought that the performance students would benefit from becoming involved in lecturing in theory or history, and that likewise theory teachers should be encouraged to participate in performance activities such as conducting. He believed that this would form a more cohesive department and counter any dissension amongst staff and students.

After so many ideas voiced and conflicting opinions, Ritchie was still not convinced either way. Introducing conservatory type training into an existing music degree structured department appeared fraught with difficulties. Strong leadership and careful management would be required to maintain the two strains of teaching to ensure parity. He was sympathetic to the dilemma Connecticut was faced with, likening it to the situation in New Zealand: 'This is the rub. Is conservatory-training directed at solo performance, wise? Obviously from an economic point of view, no.'

Music Education

Education in Schools

Concerns around education generally were commonly expressed to Ritchie during his time in America. Music Professor Herbert France, lecturer of the Conducting and Music Appreciation courses at Connecticut communicated his alarm at the reduction in teaching of fundamental subjects. France believed that the adoption of John Dewey's philosophical ideals of progressive education in practice, in

which schools catered for a wide range of subjects based on students' interests and abilities (or lack of), had contributed to deteriorating standards.²⁰⁶

Observation and participation in music classes at the University of Connecticut provided a cameo of the American education system and its students and teachers' views. The quality of teaching varied enormously across America since education was disseminated at State or County level using funds by way of a property tax, similar to New Zealand's local council rates system. States with poor economies garnered lower income for resources. They were also least likely to attract quality teachers since salaries were set by each area, and these too depended on the monies collected. This system was unlikely to change as many feared losing local autonomy if education was controlled by the administration at Congress level. Ritchie appeared to have some understanding of this view: 'In New Zealand we have lost it; and I must confess that I think it one of our weaknesses. Our Education Boards are domestic in scope rather than provincial and they have no real legislative strength in the important things of education.' On the other hand, his sympathies also lay with the less fortunate: 'Overriding all this is the consideration that a good teacher will get good results regardless of his conditions. But why not let him have good conditions'.²⁰⁷

Ritchie sat in on a variety of classes and participated in music education seminars at Connecticut. The various seminars, mostly led by his host Robert Yingling were of particular interest to Ritchie. He became absorbed in the class and enjoyed the company of the seven postgraduate students while they discussed music in junior schools. Most of the students were 'Music Supervisors' who assisted the music staff in curricula planning and performance teaching. They displayed a particular interest in the Dunedin scheme which Ritchie expounded. It was a unique concept to all and certainly there did not appear to be anything akin

²⁰⁶ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 105.

²⁰⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 23.

to it in New England.²⁰⁸ A shortage of both teachers and schools in the public arena due to an increase in family size was of particular concern. String tuition, which depended on peripatetic teachers, was now falling behind.

An afternoon music education seminar which centred on how to provide specialised music education in schools so that pupils could learn to read music was also of interest to Ritchie. Currently there was a large gap between the generalised music taught in schools at all levels and the specialisation such as theory, composition, musicology, music education, and applied music at undergraduate and postgraduate level. There was concern that the focus in the music education programme was primarily on pushing out teachers to meet the huge demand, and conviction that much more work needed to be done to ensure that new teachers could provide specialist music training to pupils. One suggestion was to introduce small piano classes of between eight to twelve students. This concept found favour with private teachers who could envisage a rise in student numbers but was less enthusiastically received by class teachers.

A visit to offices of the Director of Music in Schools in Philadelphia provided Ritchie with a closer study of the topic. The entire area was divided into eight districts, with eight vocal supervisors in each and two instrumental supervisors to cover the eight areas.²⁰⁹ Three types of instrumental teachers were employed by the department to cover all schools: salaried certified class teachers employed on a permanent basis; salaried, conservatory trained, uncertified, long-term substitute teachers; and uncertified part-time teachers auditioned and selected by the music director, Dr Louis Wersen, and his colleagues. Specialist areas such as orchestral conducting were not covered under this scheme and were therefore taught by the classroom teachers. Choral instruction was generally taught this way too but was under the guidance of the supervisors.

²⁰⁸ The concept of a cardboard keyboard cut-out which was used at KETC was not, however, unique. In *An Autobiography* George Buelow states that he asked his parents if 'they would give me 25 cents a week to pay for the lessons and also money for a cardboard keyboard on which to practice'. (Mathieson and Rivera p. 490).

²⁰⁹ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 122. The number of vocal supervisors is not able to be verified and the author suggests that this may mean eight overall.

Each Junior High and High School as well as a number of Elementary Schools boasted its own orchestra, and string class lessons took place each week using instruments provided by the department at Elementary level. Students could also be selected for a number of special ensembles: the All City Junior Choir, High School Chorus, Junior Band, Junior Orchestra, and lastly the Senior High School Orchestra which met twice weekly under Wersen. Private lessons were strongly encouraged, and there was a scheme in place whereby children could receive lessons from members of the Philadelphia Orchestra at the very reasonable cost of two and a half dollars. Music began for the very young child at Kindergarten with the introduction of percussion followed by colour xylophones, rhythm and jungle sticks, jingle bells, tom-toms, tambourines, claves, finger cymbals, melody flutes, and autoharps at elementary grade.²¹⁰

Ritchie also spent an hour in the company of Arnold Perris with whom he discussed music teaching in schools. Perris worked at Birchard Publishing in Boston (later Summy-Birchard and now Birchtree Limited) which published mainly choral works with a particular interest in music for schools.²¹¹ Much of the conversation with Perris centred on the commonly debated ‘music education versus pure music’. They talked about which trained musician produced better results – the musician-teacher or the teacher-musician – and the importance of sight-reading for singers. While they were not able to settle the former, they both believed that the path to becoming a good vocal sight-reader was to learn to play an instrument. Ritchie also met with Birchard’s manager, Don Malin. Malin deemed that any progress made in music education had been enriched by the ability of publishers to observe, then create and meet demand. The American choral tradition which was also discussed was constrained to colleges and churches rather than any adult choral organisations.

²¹⁰ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 123.

²¹¹ W. Thomas Marrocco, Mark Jacobs and Leslie A. Troutman, ‘Summy-Birchard’, *Oxford Music Online: Grove Music Online*
<<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.27112>>.

Classes and Degree Curriculum

The Connecticut Music Department was situated within the Arts and Science Faculty. Music students could commence study towards a Bachelor of Arts based on a liberal arts foundation and then specialise in one of Applied Music, Theory, Music Literature or Music Education in their third year.²¹² Ritchie was invited to attend the department's regular staff meetings and at the time of his stay he was privy to discussions on several topics. Critically, staff were debating the need to establish a College of Music which would offer a Bachelor and Master of Music, adding a year to the existing degree. Some were happy with the status quo and wondered whether they would be able to compete with the nearby University of Hartford for music students once the imminent merger between Hellyer College and the Hartt College of Music took place. It was also of concern that existing graduates both in the States and in Europe struggled to make a living solely as concert performers. Ritchie entered into the debate agreeing that the current structure did mean, as presented, a dispersion of the undergraduate students' studies; nonetheless he firmly believed that the liberal arts basis to the American degree was essential for students. Arguably, the arts foundation ought to sit in the high schools but unfortunately this was not currently the case. Further, he considered that Canterbury's MusB degree could be enhanced with an additional arts subject, in particular German, which should also be applied as a pre-requisite to the MA in the History and Literature of Music degree.

Allowing degree credits for orchestra participation was also argued at the meetings. With varied opinion amongst the nine or ten staff usually present, the matter was repeatedly deferred. A motion 'credits for organisations' was eventually tabled by Yingling but voting on this did not take place at the time. It was discussed further at the last staff meeting in November at which time the motion was withdrawn when it was determined that it would disadvantage Bachelor of Arts students who were majoring in non-music subjects. By early December, however, it was back on the agenda and was put to the vote. The result found in favour of one credit each for Band, Chorus, Orchestra, Carollers and

²¹² The first three specialisations equate to performance, composition and musicology respectively.

Small Ensemble. Staff also discussed whether to introduce summer courses for students but no consensus was reached during Ritchie's time there. Summer classes were offered by a number of American institutions and generally took place over six weeks during the academic year break for undergraduate and postgraduate students.²¹³

During the second week of December, Ritchie was invited to sit in on the Proficiency Progress Tests for students at Connecticut. These compulsory, twice yearly events for music and music education majors consisted of various sight reading exercises in both voice and piano. Since most students were non-keyboard instrumentalists, the latter caused a high degree of concern to participants. Notwithstanding, and since the outcome of the test did not affect participants' grades, Ritchie believed it to be a valuable exercise in determining whether sufficient advancement had been made. It also provided an opportunity for students to discuss their future plans with staff.

Ritchie was also pleased to observe an hour long *viva voce* Master of Arts in Music Education examination. In addition to the oral exam, the candidate was required to submit two written papers for the degree. Ritchie sat with Chairman Dr Ihrke, Robert Yingling, Smitty and Egon Kenton during the proceedings. He found the process rigorous and was impressed with the candidate, a Mrs Butler, who proved her subject knowledge with clear, factually grounded responses when faced with the examiners' probing questions. Topics ranged from organisation, future developments, and class teaching of stringed instruments to more specific questions related to the style and structure of chamber music compositions. A good knowledge of Bartók, considered the greatest contributor to string playing of the century, and his six string quartets was expected. Ihrke tendered the final question which was to offer an opinion and provide context as to who the candidate considered the most important modern American composer. Charles Ives was nominated and, following further discussion, the examiners awarded Mrs

²¹³ It was many years hence before summer courses were offered in New Zealand universities.

Butler a ‘good pass’ for the oral.²¹⁴ Egon later suggested to Ritchie that Ives might be a good choice of composer for a festival at Canterbury.

One of the last classes Ritchie sat in on at Connecticut was a Music Appreciation class taken by Professor Herbert France (d.1971). France had founded the University’s music department in the 1930s and in 1942 became its first appointed music professor.²¹⁵ The course which catered for non-musicians impressed and was of special interest to Ritchie. He wrote a fairly comprehensive draft of the course structure and points covered during the lesson. Attendees were assumed not to have learned to play an instrument or read music. The main thrust of the classes was listening to recorded music followed by the introduction of musical terms. Students were given guidance on how to listen to various music examples in terms of form and structure, texture, motives, phrases, cadences and so on before explanations and terminology were provided. Well-known excerpts from the *Nutcracker* and *Carmen* were played as well as the music of Haydn, Mozart, Tchaikovsky and Beethoven. Folk tunes and popular tunes such as the ‘Volga Boatman’ and ‘Jeanie’ were also included.

The institutions in the general Boston area offered varying study options. Harvard was concerned mainly with academic subjects such as composition and musicology although there were also conducting classes. The New England Conservatory provided some music education and theory tuition but was predominantly a conservatorium for professional musicians, while the Lowell State College provided majors in music education as well as education for general classroom teachers. Lowell delivered courses aimed at four distinct categories of educators: supervisors, consultants, specialist music teachers, and the classroom teacher.

²¹⁴ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 69.

²¹⁵ ‘Herbert France Appointed First Full-Time Professor of Music: 1942’, University of Connecticut digital School of Fine Arts timeline
<<https://sfatimeline.uconn.edu/2015/06/04/herbert-france-is-appointed-first-full-time-professor-of-music-in-1942/>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

As arranged, in early November Ritchie met with Walter Piston at Harvard before joining the twenty or so students for Piston's 'The Materials of Contemporary Music' class.²¹⁶ According to common consent, Professor Piston was the Vaughan Williams of America and Ritchie had looked forward to his meeting with Piston with great anticipation.²¹⁷ The course consisted of thrice-weekly lectures in which students were guided in the analysis of compositions of mainly twentieth-century works. The class comprised approximately fifty per cent musicologists who were obliged to study and understand the practical aspects of composition. When Ritchie broached the subject of these particular students taking a harmony class, the response by Piston was quick and brief: '...We refuse to pass a musicologist who has no ability at harmony or composition'.²¹⁸

A detailed harmonic analysis of Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales* was being undertaken and each chord and note was scrutinised. According to Ritchie, Piston's 'essentially practical and musical approach' guided students away from a purely theoretical nomenclature analysis to one which revealed unessential notes, sequences and pedal points. The course ran in conjunction with Piston's composition seminars in which students were required to compose short pieces in the style being studied. As well as attending a second of these classes Ritchie also joined a three hour first year lecture 'History and Literature of Music to 1600' taught by musicologist Professor John Ward. Ritchie was very taken with the two text books used: Volume two of the *New Oxford History*, and the *Historical Anthology of Music*. He considered the presentation by Ward 'a most interesting and well-planned, illustrated dissertation on twelfth-century songs'.

Ritchie spent some time reflecting on his time at Harvard and acknowledged that he was able to dispel some misconceptions which had been conveyed by others prior to his visit. Harvard was considered by many to be an ivory tower, aloof from its environment and other institutions. While there was some truth in that, he

²¹⁶ During a visit to Piston's home Ritchie learned that Piston's paternal grandfather was an Italian seaman named Antonio Pistone who had settled in Maine and subsequently anglicised his name to Antony Piston.

²¹⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, letter to Anita, 21 October 1956.

²¹⁸ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 63.

did not consider that its ideals of academic and higher learning in a traditional British sense with its very high entrance qualifications disadvantaged the general population. As a private institution, Harvard did not have responsibility to the state. There were also two other universities in the region which students could choose from: Boston, and North Eastern. Composition was the music department's main function while at undergraduate level musicology with its basis in scholarship and closely related to composition studies was encouraged. Robert Yingling had in fact studied at Harvard attaining a doctorate in music education in the 1940s. With the recent fragmentation of music education into its various strains such as psychology, methodology and pedagogy, however, Harvard was now less interested in providing music education as an option, and it was only catered for under certain conditions.

Kraehenbuehl was Ritchie's first point of contact at Yale University's School of Music. Kraehenbuehl was founder and editor of the forthcoming bi-annual publication *Journal of Music Theory* and Ritchie took the opportunity of purchasing a subscription on behalf of Canterbury University College (CUC). The two men discussed music studies at their respective universities. There were approximately seven thousand three hundred students currently at Yale and both men and women could enrol in the professional schools such as medicine, law and music. Staff were well aware that even good professionals were hard pressed to earn an adequate salary and the structure agreed on was to ensure that its graduates were well-equipped for a music career. As things stood music students were permitted to complete a Bachelor of Music in applied music, theory, composition or musicology. Study for a Bachelor of Arts in music under the liberal arts programme was also available but restricted to men only.

This structure was about to change as the Yale School of Music was currently in the process of becoming a graduate professional school. From 1958 it would no longer offer an undergraduate degree, conferring only a Master of Music degree and accept a maximum of one hundred students. Students would specialise in applied music, composition or musicology but they would also be competent in

the two non-specialist areas.²¹⁹ Ritchie queried whether this would disadvantage the local community for undergraduate study; however, much like Harvard's response, Kraehenbuehl replied that Yale bore no responsibility to the State since it was a private institution that relied solely on students' fees, endowments, and alumni gifts. Further, with a net loss of two hundred thousand dollars last year from the music school alone, new measures had to be made so that the ideals and high standards which Yale was founded on could be maintained. The graduate courses offered in music would thus be Master in Arts, Master in Music and a PhD in Musicology, Composition, Theory and Applied Music.²²⁰ There was an emphasis on harmony, counterpoint, history and orchestration within Applied Music while Theory involved the study of theoretical teaching through the centuries with the sole aim of producing theoreticians. A harmony and history course overseen by Leo Schrade ensured that the harmonic exercises – all melodies from the 'great composers' – were viewed in historical context, while counterpoint studies based on plainsong focussed on composition in a given style.²²¹

Yale's Dean of Music, Luther Noss, was particularly dismissive of the role of Music Education in the United States: 'educationalists, in general [...] have made a religion out of their psychology, pedagogy and methodology [...] and [...] risen in the administration and executive ranks to a position of extraordinary power [...] [They have] controlled the education programme in many States and commanded salaries of up to twenty thousand dollars'. Noss believed that these principles had insinuated themselves into universities and he attributed the increasingly superficial music content at many institutions to the heavily weighted education courses which teachers were required to take. In his view this weakened their abilities as musicians. Yale had discontinued its Doctorate in Education; however, notwithstanding its private status, it had however come under increasing pressure

²¹⁹ Currently Yale School of Music is the graduate school and The Department of Music in Yale College offers undergraduate degrees. This may have been the case here which meant that you could do a Bachelor of Arts in music but not a Bachelor of Music.

²²⁰ In 1958 only a Master of Music was conferred. Yale School of Music, 'History' <<https://music.yale.edu/about/history/>> [accessed 21 July 2019].

²²¹ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 76.

to provide teacher training. To this end, a one year course heavily endowed by the Carnegie Foundation was to be made available following completion of the existing music course.

Ritchie attended several classes at Yale including two lectures taken by Donald Loach: Modal Counterpoint, a study of counterpoint in a sixteenth-century style; and Harmony, which for this particular session focussed on aural perception. Ritchie enjoyed Roach's teaching style and found him to be a very sound lecturer.²²² According to Roach Kitson was highly thought of and counterpoint still had a strong hold in America. Ritchie also observed the Battell Professor of Theory, Richard Frank Donovan, lead individual tutorials with his composition students. Ritchie was familiar with Donovan's works, having conducted his *Fantasy on American Folk Songs* with the Addington Workshop choir in New Zealand. He was also interested in his use of Paul Hindemith's textbooks *Two-part Writing* and *Traditional Harmony*, so much so that he purchased these while there.

The Dean of Music, Doris Silbert, assistant Ruth Ring, and Associate Professor Gertrude Parker Smith welcomed Ritchie to Smith College, providing him with information about the department and the courses available to students. Ritchie was astonished to hear that the music student numbers of just over one hundred were supported by what he considered a large number of twenty staff. Courses included composition, literature, music pedagogy and practical music which could be put towards a Bachelor of Arts degree. Applied music was not offered as a major since the purpose of the programme was to produce well-rounded musicians rather than performers.²²³

Ruth Ring discussed the range of choral music which was offered at the College. There were three freshman choirs of one hundred, an eighty strong Smith College Choir made up of sophomores and juniors, a seniors and juniors Glee Club, and

²²² Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 79.

²²³ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 93.

the Smith College Chamber Singers, an auditioned and specially selected ensemble.²²⁴ Each group rehearsed between two to three times per week for around one and a half to two hours in preparation for various performances throughout the year. The Chamber Singers toured nationally and in Europe while the freshman and College choirs alternated for Sunday chapel, and performed locally.

Although his time at the College was limited, Ritchie was able to attend a combined rehearsal of the choirs taken by the current Director of Choirs, Mrs Helen Smith who was deputising for Iva Dee Hiatt, and observe two classes.²²⁵ The first was a course on Haydn and Mozart for senior students in which Silbert was currently undertaking a detailed study of *The Marriage of Figaro*, and the second was Tonal Organisation for sophomores, juniors and seniors which Smith taught: '[a] sensible survey of 1st mov't form was made'.²²⁶

Further discussions were had with various staff following the classes. One related to the purchase of the Smith College Archives with secretary, Olive Deith who also gave him a number of Valley Press publications comprising American composers and their catalogue. Ritchie resolved to present these to Vernon Griffiths on his return.²²⁷ He spoke briefly with piano teacher Bianca del Vecchio and the Smith College Symphony conductor and cellist, Marion deRonde (1902-1985), who presented him with one of the orchestra's recordings. DeRonde expressed her wish to come to New Zealand to teach but there is no evidence that this occurred.²²⁸

The Juilliard School of Music met Ritchie's expectations as an outstanding institution with an exceptional auditorium. The Dean, Mark Schubart, spent some

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 94.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 95.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Smith College Archives, 'Marion DeRonde Papers: Biographical and Historical', in *Five College Archives and Manuscript Collections*
<https://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/smitharchives/manosca388_bioghist.html>
[accessed 14 July 2019].

time explaining the School's curriculum to Ritchie.²²⁹ It was in essence similar to other private institutions Ritchie had encountered in America. There was the provision of a liberal arts programme but this led to a Bachelor of Science rather than an Arts degree because music was classified as a science by the New York Education Department.²³⁰ The School also ran a Saturday morning music programme for around six hundred children aged ten and upwards. The focus was to teach basic musicianship skills to ensure students were given the opportunity for an earlier specialisation in music than the liberal-arts foundation allowed.

Over two days spent at the school, Ritchie attended a variety of classes including one of the School's 'Literature and Materials of Music' course seminars. Headed by Richard Franko Goldman (1910-1980), Literature and Materials of Music was a four-year course which had been developed by William Schuman (1910-1992) and introduced to the school in the late 1940s.²³¹ Schuman had sought to replace the traditional theory teaching at Juilliard with an approach in which students could learn about music and composition in context; thus practical musicians would gain a comprehensive understanding of the works they performed.²³²

In essence, Ritchie understood it to be a course which integrated history, set works, harmony, counterpoint, orchestration, form, music criticism, aural training, and keyboard tests.²³³ Following Goldman's seminar, Ritchie was invited to a rehearsal by students at the Opera Theatre.²³⁴ He enjoyed it immensely not least

²²⁹ 'Paid notice: Deaths Schubart, Mark, Jan 30, 2000', in the *New York Times*, Archives 2000 <<https://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/30/classified/paid-notice-deaths-schubart-mark.html>> [accessed 14 July 2014].

²³⁰ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 109;

Andrea Olmstead, *Juilliard: A History* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1999), p. 135.

²³¹ K. Gary Adams, *William Schuman: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998), p. 12.

²³² William Schuman, 'On Teaching the Literature and Materials of Music', *The Musical Quarterly*, 34.2 (1948), 155-168 <www.jstor.org/stable/739302>.

²³³ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, letter to Anita, 16 December 1956.

²³⁴ This venue was likely to be the Juilliard concert hall while the group was the Juilliard Opera Theater which came under the umbrella of the Juilliard School of Music.

for the students' professionalism and enthusiasm as they worked on a late Puccini work under the direction of Frederic Cohen (1923-1967).²³⁵

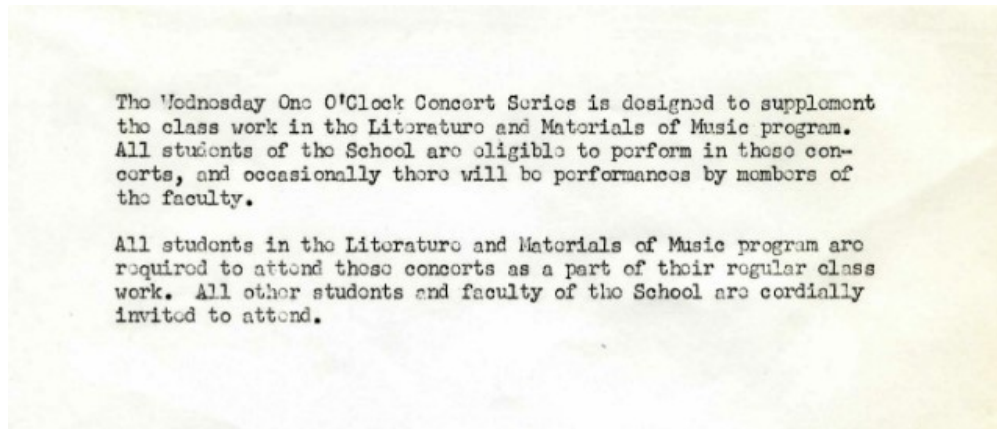


Figure 49: Excerpt from Juilliard Opera Theater of the Juilliard School of Music 1956 programme.²³⁶

Ritchie was similarly impressed with the playing of the Juilliard Orchestra as they rehearsed Camille Saint-Saëns' Third Symphony with conductor Jean Morel. Ritchie was particularly struck by the performers' liveliness, their technique, and attendance to rhythmic accuracy, decreeing it 'a remarkably good orchestra'. Ritchie also thoroughly enjoyed and applauded Morel's orthodox yet imaginative conducting style as well as his firm handling of the players. The director's admonishments were interspersed with humour:

You Americans are all the same: devoted to the humanities. But being human isn't what you're at Juilliard for. You are here to succeed. When you go to Carnegie Hall you won't succeed because you are human – you'll succeed because you are a sensitive musician!²³⁷

²³⁵ The group may have been preparing for a performance in March which included Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* (1917-18); Juilliard JMedia, 'Juilliard Opera Theater: March 22 and 23, 1957 [program]', p. 1
<<http://jmedia.juilliard.edu/digital/collection/p16995coll3/id/11882/rec/1>> [accessed 14 July 2014].

²³⁶ Juilliard JMedia, 'Wednesday one o'clock concert ; November 28, 1956 [program]', p. 1
<<http://jmedia.juilliard.edu/digital/collection/p16995coll3/id/12003/rec/3>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

²³⁷ Ritchie papers, USA diary.

Ritchie was also delighted to be able to sit in on auditions being held, one of four sessions held annually at Juilliard. The jury was headed by Mark Schubart and included William Schuman and a number of other faculty staff. The players were required to perform passages from Robert Schumann's piano concerto and although Ritchie only had time to hear six of the seventeen players, he was impressed by their excellent technique but considered that most ruined their performance musically by the very quick tempo: '[They] took the cadenza faster than I've ever heard it!'. Ritchie's final engagement at Juilliard was an evening student recital of chamber works. The quality of all of the playing was exceptional but he was particularly drawn to a pianist performing the Brahms B major Trio, Richard Syracuse (1934-2014), judging him 'a name to watch'.²³⁸

Boston University had six hundred music students and twenty staff including Karl Geiringer (1899-1989) and Composer-in-Residence, Gardner Read. Ritchie was familiar with Read's *Thesaurus of Orchestral Devices* and was delighted to engage in conversation with him. Emphasis at the department was placed on training the musician first with music education as a secondary consideration. Since there was also a Music Education programme at the university, the familiar conflict between music and music education also existed. As well as attending John Hassen's 'Bach's Music' class, Ritchie joined the postgraduate students for Read's 'Contemporary Techniques' course in which pan-diatonicism was the topic under study. Ritchie was able to give a critical ear to the student's efforts as their individual weekly pieces were presented by the most accomplished pianist of the group; 'Talk about economy of material, why they were just downright mean with it. But two were quite striking'.

Eastman took a cautious approach to performance, offering a broad training and liberal arts programme over four years to ensure students were well-placed in terms of employment. Nearly half entered the teaching profession and even performers could pursue a course which led to teacher certification. All fourth

²³⁸ Syracuse had a successful performing and teaching career. 'Richard Syracuse', *Legacy* <<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/richard-syracuse-obituary?pid=173251488>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

year students either played in the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra or had their works performed. Numerous ensembles rehearsed and performed throughout the year including standard chamber groups and orchestras as well as woodwind quintets, brass ensembles and French horn quartets. The graduate school offered a Doctor of Musical Arts (AMD) for which a high standard of performance was required together with composing and conducting skills, and a good knowledge of music history and literature.

Programmes and Performance

Ritchie's first experience of music performance in the States was the Hartford Symphony Orchestra's subscription concert which took place in an auditorium similar in size to Connecticut University's main recital centre.²³⁹ The conductor was Fritz Mahler (1901-1973) whose father was a cousin of Gustav Mahler.²⁴⁰ The programme consisted of a Vivaldi String Concerto, Barber's *Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance* ('an exciting modern work – this was its first performance'), Brahms' Symphony No. 2 and Strauss' *Four Last Songs* with soprano Heidi Krall (1920-2013).²⁴¹ Ritchie did not rate Mahler particularly highly as a conductor and Krall's singing was too cold and impersonal for his liking. Notwithstanding, the audience, including Ritchie, were appreciative of the orchestra's performance and showed great enthusiasm throughout. The New York Philharmonic Orchestra also performed in Hartford under conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos during Ritchie's stay. The highlight for Ritchie on the programme

²³⁹ This is believed to be the Bushnell Memorial Hall, now Mortensen Hall, at the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts.

²⁴⁰ Ritchie papers, Personal letters folder, Ritchie wrote to Anita that he was informed that Fritz was Gustav's nephew but records show this is incorrect; Gene Biringer and Jonas Westover, 'Mahler, Fritz', (2013) *Oxford Music Online: Grove Music Online* <<https://doi-org.ezproxy.waikato.ac.nz/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2292314>>.

²⁴¹ Ritchie papers, Personal letters folder, letter to Anita, 17 October 1956. This was not the premiere of the work since it was completed in early 1956 and performed soon afterwards but it may have been Hartford's first. 'Dance of Vengeance, Op. 23a: About the Work, *The Kennedy Center* <<http://www.kennedy-center.org/artist/composition/3171>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

was Brahms' fourth Symphony.²⁴² According to Ritchie, Mitropoulos's conducting style which was 'quite ungainly at times' belied his skill.²⁴³ He exerted the greatest sensitive control over the one hundred highly skilled players and achieved stunning results.

Ritchie's ten-day stay in Boston in November gave him ample opportunity to attend a number of events. He listened to a final rehearsal of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) ahead of the concert the following day. Of the one hundred and sixteen organizations of its kind in the United States, the Boston Symphony was believed to be the most widely known and appreciated by its followers. Due to the venue's relatively small size and popularity of the orchestra, each of the orchestra's recitals was repeated, usually to sell-out performances. Additionally, tickets were offered to the public for a selection of final rehearsals. The orchestra's home, the two thousand eight hundred-seat Symphony Hall had superb acoustics, described by Ritchie as 'near perfect'.²⁴⁴ The hall was situated above the Symphony railway station and like many concert-goers Ritchie used the city's efficient underground network to travel to hear the one hundred players orchestra perform. The programme of Brahms' First Symphony, Stravinsky's *The Card Game* and Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* was delivered under the baton of Charles Munch.

A month later Ritchie was delighted to again hear the Boston Orchestra, this time in Connecticut. Together with Beethoven's Sixth and Honegger's Symphony No. 2 for Strings – '...a little dull rhythmically and thematically' – the programme included Albert Roussel's *Bacchus and Ariane* Suite No. 2 Opus 43 which Ritchie particularly enjoyed: 'Very colourful and exciting...the Nat Orch should do'.²⁴⁵ He was struck by the brilliance of tone and the 'sensitive flexibility' of playing:

²⁴² The complete programme performed is shown in 'Program November 5', in *Bushnell Prompter* in New York Philharmonic, Leon Levy Digital Archives, p. 9
<<https://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/101b6ae4-bd01-4c8a-85e7-48fa327dba58-0.1/fullview#page/8/mode/2up>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

²⁴³ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, letter to Anita, 6 November 1956.

²⁴⁴ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, 1957.

²⁴⁵ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 107.

‘What a thrill to hear a real brass fortissimo...’, and of the directing noted that ‘Munch was in his element, not a worry in the world’.

Ritchie attended one final performance of the BSO in January 1957. This time concert-master and associate conductor Richard Burgin (1892-1981) directed the orchestra in their home centre. Ritchie considered Burgin somewhat inexperienced as a conductor; nonetheless the orchestra’s performance of the programme which included works of Bach, Honegger (Rugby), Debussy, Ravel and Mahler was exceptional. Ritchie wondered, however, why Mahler’s fourth symphony was included ‘with its dullness, its stolid meandering mind-wandering, its plagiarism (esp. Schubert) and its verbosity!’.²⁴⁶

One of the most memorable recitals Ritchie attended was that of the Vienna Philharmonic at Hartford in early December 1956. Sponsored by the Bushnell Community Music Association, the all-male orchestra’s performance with conductor André Cluytens (1905-1967) seemed to awaken the poet in Ritchie:

A delight to hear [...] with its homogeneity [...] that thrills with its rich blend of tonal and its unanimous and flexible rhythmic cohesion. In matters of tempo and rhythm it is as sensitive as the best of pianists and throughout every section there is a sound core of musicianship. Finally the strings are warm [...], the oboist has the smoothest tone; the horns are light and pure...the brass are rather restrained [...]. The percussion accurate and precise [...] Even the encore *Tales from the Vienna Woods* sounded like a great piece!!²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶ Ritchie’s query might well have been answered by the following quotation from Burgin: ‘Speaking of Mahler, it was difficult at first for me to program his music when I conducted the orchestra. I wanted to do the complete Mahler Fourth, but the trustees said no. Mahler (in the early 1940s) was taboo—people considered him long, tedious, and everything else bad. I always liked Mahler very much; so I compromised and asked to do the last two movements of the Fourth. They agreed. Then, after the performance, we got letters asking, why don’t we do the whole symphony? So I was allowed to do it later that season. Things had improved greatly in the fifties and sixties—my Mahler programs with the BSO generally had an enthusiastic response from the orchestra and the audience’. Diana Burgin, ‘Memorialia Part II’, (2011), *Diana Burgin* <<http://dianaburgin.com/Memorialia03-Part%202.html>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

²⁴⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, 1957, p. 102.



Figure 50: Concert in Hartford 8 December 1956 excerpt from the Vienna Philharmonica online archives.²⁴⁸

The Philadelphia Orchestra presented a recital at the Academy of Music concert hall in Broad Street during Ritchie's overnight stay in the city on 17 December. It was one of the orchestra's regular and popular youth concerts for those aged under twenty-five and he had been unsuccessful in purchasing a ticket from the box office that morning. Having relayed his disappointment at missing out on the recital to music education department staff earlier in the day, however, a ticket was procured for him. He enjoyed the concert which consisted of Bach's Pastoral Symphony from the Christmas Cantata, Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor with soloist Rudolf Serkin (1903-1991), and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4.²⁴⁹ The orchestra was not quite the standard of the Boston, but nonetheless *Ritchie* found it excellent. He was especially taken with the last two movements of the Tchaikovsky Symphony which he was unable to fault. He enjoyed Serkin's dynamic performance enormously describing it as 'imaginative, vivacious and poetic'.²⁵⁰

During the time of Ritchie's visit to New York and the Juilliard School, he was happy to pay five dollars for a seat at the famed Carnegie Hall to hear a recital by the Philharmonic Symphony under Leonard Bernstein. The programme included Beethoven's *Prometheus*, Mozart's C minor Piano Concerto with Rudolf Firkušny, *Song of the Nightingale* by Stravinsky and Ravel's *La Valse*. Although '...nowhere near the equal of the Boston S.O...', he enjoyed the performance

²⁴⁸ 'Concert in Hartford', *Weiner Philharmoniker in Concerts*
 <<https://www.wienerphilharmoniker.at/concerts/concert-detail/event-id/8967/from-search/True>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

²⁴⁹ Ritchie papers, noted as cantata in Ritchie's diary but this may be Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*.

²⁵⁰ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 125.

overall in particular Firkusny's playing: '...musicianship plus. Graceful but firm, elegant but masculine'. He placed some of the orchestra's shortcomings at the conductor's feet whose style he described as '...tantamount to a one-man ballet, and which seemingly neglects many details of rhythm. The result is a quite meaningless metrical procession of notes on occasion'. Ritchie observed that since Bernstein did not use a baton, there was the transmission of '...a great deal of superfluous movement to his body', and his 'flamboyancy results in all dynamic climaxes being *ffff*'. This meant that there was a much too early anticipation of the 'slight dramatic fervour' the Ravel requires at the end and which was already 'rhythmically stodgy'. Still, 'it did prove that the N.Y. Orch is the loudest probably in the world'. He was gratified to note the next day that he was not alone in his view: 'both reputable critics gave Bernstein the works'.

Ritchie met with Professor Martin Bernstein at the New York University in Washington Square where they were joined by musicologist Curt Sachs for afternoon tea. Ritchie found Sachs to be rather dogmatic but a 'pleasant, old, grey-bearded scholar' nonetheless. Sachs was particularly fearful of the future of musicology in the States, citing the lack of opportunities for his graduates as indicative of its probable demise. An evening recital by the Mannes Orchestra under Carl Bamberger at the Theresa L. Kaufmann Auditorium was next on Ritchie's schedule. This was part of a free concert series run by the Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA).²⁵¹ Whilst he considered the orchestra was a little too ambitious in attempting Bruckner's Symphony No. 7, its rendition of Corelli's Christmas Concerto and the Four Last Songs by Strauss together with excellent work by soprano Ruth Morris made his attendance worthwhile.

Amongst the number of student recitals Ritchie heard was one which he attended with Kraehenbuehl at Sprague Hall. The performers comprised a pianist, singer and a woodwind group, and performed works by Mozart, Morley, Bach, Milhaud and Harold Genzmer's *Sonatine*: 'a bright little work (1940). Slow movement

²⁵¹ Ritchie papers, Personal letters folder, letter to Anita, 21 December 1956.

rather ingenuous and dull'.²⁵² In Ritchie's view the singer was outshone by her accompanist, Charles Berkhardt, while the performers of the final item, Milhaud's *Suite for Woodwind Quintet*, were particularly impressive displaying technical skill and excellent quality of tone. He also attended events in Jordan Hall, the primary performance venue of the New England Conservatory. The first was a choral rehearsal under the directorship of esteemed choral conductor Lorna Cooke deVaron (1921-2018).²⁵³ The second was an evening recital of soprano Maeda Sprengling and violinist Uni Sprengling accompanied on piano by Alan Thomas. There was no doubting their excellent musicianship but the music, which included *Duo for Violin and Soloist* composed specially for the sisters by Alan Thomas, was not wholly successful: 'a too testing programme...Persichetti is rather dull but "very" modern! The programme was long and the encores quite unnecessary'.

There were fewer Opera offerings than orchestral; however, not long after his arrival in Connecticut Ritchie accompanied Yingling to a performance of *La Traviata* by the New York City Opera Company at the University's auditorium. The venue was filled to capacity and student concessions brought a large number of younger listeners. The production was excellent and the orchestra under conductor, Erich Leinsdorf (1912-1993), superb.²⁵⁴ The cast too was very good and the audience applauded every big solo although it was apparent that, like Ritchie, the audience favoured Cornell MacNeil's (1922-2011) performance as Giorgio Germont over soprano Frances Yeend (1913-2008). Her performance, too, was outstanding but for Ritchie, there was simply a little too much vibrato.

Additionally Ritchie paid what he considered a rather exorbitant eight dollars for the privilege of attending a performance of *Le Nozze de Figaro* by the Metropolitan Opera in New York. He balked at paying the additional one dollar for the libretto, and a further twenty-five cents for the use of opera glasses which

²⁵² Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, pp. 78-79.

²⁵³ New England Conservatory, 'Celebrating Lorna Cooke deVaron' in *Flickr* <<https://www.flickr.com/photos/27770344@N02/sets/72157626294866254/>> [accessed 15 July 2019].

²⁵⁴ Ritchie papers, Personal letters folder, letter from Ritchie to Anita, 31 October 1956.

were available for hire by inserting the fee into a slot on the back of the seat in front. He wrote to Anita of his experience:

It has been glowingly reviewed, I understand, by all the critics, so that it can be taken as representative of their better work. This is surprising to me because one could not say there was anything outstanding about it. The Metropolitan Opera itself is old and untidy; its mood is not one of tradition but of 'old fogeyism' – one can tell that from the pictures on the walls, the uncomfortably close seating, the primitive elevators and the general appearance of the numerous officials [...] who condescendingly direct all but the season ticket holders to their places of entry. In a word, the Met looks as though it is on its last legs! Only the ushers, young men in uniform, betray a trace of the 20th Century.²⁵⁵

The audience too did not please him. Many arrived late without apology and continued to talk throughout. Further, 'There is a row on, at the moment, over a woman, Callas, the prima donna of the outfit. She's got a voice that rasps badly and never gets right on the note. She could well be done without!'.²⁵⁶ Maria Callas was not the soloist for this performance but Ritchie had recently seen a television recording of her in *Tosca* which had debuted at the Metropolitan a month before.²⁵⁷ In any event to say that Ritchie was deeply disappointed in both the performance and the surroundings is probably going too far – he was particularly impressed with the chorus and dancers while soloist Laurel Hurley as Susanna and Lisa Della Casa as the Countess also pleased him – but certainly the experience did not quite meet his expectations.

Ballet too was on offer and Ritchie was enthralled by a performance of the New York City Ballet at the New York City Center. The company had recently returned from a ten-week European tour and were in excellent form. The programme consisted of the choreographed works of both the ballet's artistic director and founder, George Balanchine, and its associated artistic director,

²⁵⁵ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 110.

²⁵⁶ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, letter to Anita, 16 December 1956.

²⁵⁷ '[Met Performance] CID: 173000: Norma', *MetOpera Database: The Metropolitan Opera Archives* <<http://69.18.170.204/archives/frame.htm>> [accessed 15 July 2019].

Jerome Robbins.²⁵⁸ The dances included Balanchine's *Serenade* (1934) and *Allegro Brillante* (1956) to the music of Tchaikovsky and the colourful and lively *Bourrée Fantasque* (1949) (Chabrier), together with Robbins's *The Cage* (1951) to Stravinsky's Concerto in D for String Orchestra. The décor was outstanding, the dances were brilliantly executed and the orchestra was exceptional.

Of all the musical offerings available, voice in all its forms was the most accessible. From student recitals to small amateur ensembles and larger choirs, there was ample opportunity for Ritchie to attend, listen and critique programmes and performances. At Connecticut he sat in on Yingling's individual voice lessons and was invited to conduct a rehearsal of Yingling's church choir. He accompanied Kenton to the Second Annual Concert of the Hartt College Alumni Association in Hartford. Ritchie was particularly impressed by singer and University of Connecticut voice lecturer Philip Treggor (1919-2004) whose set included Brahms lieder, Bach arias and some Britten folk songs together with two contemporary works.²⁵⁹ Ritchie felt the two modern works were not wholly successful, describing one as 'Finzi-ish, with weak word-setting but musical' and the other as 'typical young iconoclasts' juvenilia'. Pianist Enid Katahn's (b. 1932) performance of Ravel's *Sonatine* was also not to his liking: 'It was brutally unmusical – not a patch on Margaret Nielsen's performance, even though this girl has a virtuosic technique. Tempi, phrasing, tone colour all to pot'. He was, however, complimentary of Katahn's rendition of Mendelssohn's G minor Concerto with the Hartt Symphony Orchestra: 'This was good; clear and brilliant'.²⁶⁰ Ritchie may have been taught in the English tradition but he was knowledgeable of American music and the thought struck him before he retired

²⁵⁸ *Serenade* was Balanchine's first created American original ballet and *Allegro Brillante* his most recent. 'The George Balanchine Trust', (2011)
<<http://balanchine.com/category/chronological/>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

²⁵⁹ 'Philip N. Treggor', *Hartford Courant: Obituaries in Legacy* (2004)
<<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/hartfordcourant/obituary.aspx?pid=1839949>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

²⁶⁰ 'Enid Katahn', *Discogs*, <<https://www.discogs.com/artist/2999048-Enid-Katahn>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

for the evening: 'It was Howard Hanson's 60th birthday today but I saw no mention of it in programmes or in musical circles anywhere'.²⁶¹

As the festive season approached so too did opportunities for choral performances. Ritchie enjoyed the University Choir of sixty singers give a heart-warming Candlelight Carol Service and he listened to the University Carollers rehearse under Smitty as they prepared for a forthcoming television appearance. This small group of approximately fifteen young singers delighted Ritchie with their quality of tone and blend, excellent diction, and spirited sense of rhythm, and in fact were not unlike the Canterbury Madrigal Singers. Favourable comparisons were also made when the University of Connecticut Concert Choir and conductor Philip Treggor in conjunction with the Trinity College Glee Club presented a programme of Christmas music, later writing: 'the U. Conn group is quite impressive – v. like C.U.C.'. ²⁶²

Ritchie attended several choral rehearsals and performances in New York including a recital of the Harvard Glee Club and the Radcliffe College Choir, both of which were under the directorship of Professor Woodworth. Radcliffe was at the time the corresponding women's institution to the all-male Harvard. According to Ritchie, both choirs were exceptionally good although he did feel that the women's tone quality was perhaps not quite the match of their male counterparts. All of the choir members were individually selected, and a process whereby the choristers were graded on a scale from one to ten also took place periodically. The Harvard Glee Club was in all regards the most outstanding in American choral music that Ritchie had heard, maintaining the highest standard in terms of both programmes and skill. Ritchie was also invited to a recital by Woodworth's Radcliffe Choral Society at Sanders Theatre. The concert ended with a combined group of eight hundred voices from three schools together with the choir singing Parry's *Jerusalem*: 'The standard was high, the music well-chosen – no rubbish. A most absorbing evening'. ²⁶³

²⁶¹ Howard Hanson was Director of the Eastman School of Music from 1924-1960.

²⁶² Canterbury University College.

²⁶³ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 65.

Ritchie arrived at St Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, at around noon on 18 December to hear a performance of Britten's Ceremony of Carols by the University's Chapel Choir. By now Ritchie had been rewarded with some excellent choral performances at universities and this performance too did not disappoint. He finished the day with an evening concert at St Thomas's Church on Fifth Avenue to hear the Smith College Glee Club and the Hamilton College Choir perform. Each choir delighted the audience with appropriate Christmas music before they combined for Vivaldi's Gloria, a feat which Ritchie considered 'some of the finest choral work' he had heard.²⁶⁴

The next day Ritchie caught the Staten Island Ferry then bus to Wagner College, a co-education Lutheran college of around one thousand one hundred students. A recital of its College Choir with director Sigvart Steen and the First Air Force Band took place in the evening, a festive affair with a brilliant display of Christmas lights and decorations. Ritchie thought highly of both groups: the military band was first-rate and its tone exquisite, while the a cappella choir of fifty singers displayed great technical skill and musicality.

Overall Ritchie found the standard of the amateur orchestral musician exceptionally good. The gap between the professional and amateur was markedly smaller than in New Zealand and in the matter of string tone in particular the best high school orchestra outclassed any amateur and most professional New Zealand ensembles. Ritchie concluded that the United States was far ahead of New Zealand in instrumental music playing, with incredibly high standards at secondary school level alone. Musicians were technically excellent and thus the normal orchestral repertoire was executed and performed very well.

There were also differences in musical practice between New Zealand and America. New Zealand orchestral directors made a study of new works prior to rehearsal whereas established American conductors would merely run through them with the orchestra. In Ritchie's view, this left American listeners with little

²⁶⁴ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 126.

hope of 'clarity of conception'. Repertoire too was compared somewhat unfavourably with a much greater degree of duplication of programmes in the States. Piston's Third Symphony, for example, was rehearsed in Boston then performed in five venues in a radius of less than two hundred miles within a week. Ritchie conceded that there were vast population differences which meant that there were sufficient numbers for American composers to have their works heard in their own locality. In addition there were a much greater number of concert broadcasts in New Zealand than in America which made duplication of live performance less likely. New Zealand composers too experienced greater access to support from the State and musical organisations than American composers with the exception of the noted composers Barber, Copland, Piston and Harris who were well-supported.

The availability of funding generally too had an impact on performance. Financial support of the church authorities for instance was a factor in determining the high quality of church music in the States compared with that in New Zealand. A choirmaster of an average country protestant church of a reasonably large congregation was paid one thousand seven hundred dollars and the organist one thousand one hundred dollars per annum while a Catholic Church organist could earn seventy-five dollars per week. Without such backing, Dr Ihrke suggested, church music in New Zealand would remain weak. Salaries generally were markedly different to those in New Zealand. The average salary for a top conductor in the States at the time was approximately twenty-five thousand dollars while astonishingly the best singers earned a minimum of seventy-five thousand dollars.

A brief time was spent with Mary Van Ess (1915-2007), Director of Placement for Juilliard, discussing resident quartets and players' annual salaries.²⁶⁵ Members of Cincinnati's Resident string quartet, LaSalle, reportedly earned five hundred dollars each while the Alard Quartet which had been launched at Juilliard two

²⁶⁵ 'Remembering The Life Of Mary (Wrany) 1915 – 2007', *Obituaries.Normantranscript.Com*, 2019 <<http://obituaries.normantranscript.com/obituary/mary-wrany-744925542>> [Accessed 2 July 2019].

years previously received two thousand four hundred dollars after securing a residency at the University of Texas on teaching fellowships. They had since been given a placement at Wilmington College and were likely, according to Van Ess, earning as much as four thousand dollars.²⁶⁶ Notwithstanding, many were concerned for graduates who wished to forge a career in performance, and course conditions often reflected this. Yale, for instance, required performers in the Bachelor of Arts programme to play modern music on their associated instruments: a flutist would need to be proficient on oboe, clarinet and bassoon; a violinist adept on viola and cello. Kraehenbuehl was pessimistic of the soloist's future, declaring that 'the age of the wild-eyed virtuoso is nearing an end – the brilliant conductor will soon be unemployed'. It was his view that instead, smaller ensembles such as the Solisti di Zagreb would dominate the professional scene.²⁶⁷

Singers too were generally technically good but Ritchie believed that the lack of good music let performances down. Additionally while orchestral music was widely and enthusiastically received, choral music lacked public support which meant that there was correspondingly less drive to sustain it. Rehearsals and classes were closely observed and compared with current practice in New Zealand. Ritchie was particularly interested in the utilisation of the boy soprano and the cambiata voice in choirs. American boys appeared to begin this process earlier than those in New Zealand although it lasted longer. To maintain the boys' interest in singing during this transition period of two to three years from the age of eleven, efforts were made to utilise these young male singers by including choral arrangements with the appropriate narrow range of C4 to G4.

Further observations were made: 'The American concept of singing against the resistance of the body is becoming clearer to me. It certainly is effective. On these grounds Bob justifies the teaching of German to singers for body resistance and

²⁶⁶ The quartet remained at Wilmington before moving to Canterbury in 1963. 'Final Appearance of Alard Quartet Here Friday', *Wilmington News-Journal* in *Newspapers.com*, (28 March 1963) <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/22845529/wilmington_newsjournal/> [accessed 19 July 2019].

²⁶⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 77.

Italian for purity of sounds'. There were contrasts between New Zealand and America in perception regarding the difficulty of music whereby New Zealand appeared more progressive: Ritchie was surprised, for example, by Walter Ehert's classification of 'difficult' for Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*.

New Music

Ritchie had limited time to compose while away although he managed some writing and copying most mornings on his journey to the States.²⁶⁸ He was keen to discuss composers and their music with his American colleagues and gather their views and form conclusions about contemporary music. The 12 tone-row was one topic often discussed and while Ritchie had doubts about its validity, he was broadminded enough to try the technique as an exercise. While he did not utilise it in his own works, Piston included it in his teaching because he believed that, despite its rigidity, it was an effective medium when used correctly. Since Ritchie was a great admirer of Piston, it could be reasonably assumed that his interest was piqued during one of Piston's classes. Nonetheless, Ritchie's efforts in using the method confirmed his negative view of it as an arbitrary system that produced results which the composer could not foresee, and revealed little about the composer's skill or musicianship. Ritchie did not attempt to use this again in his composing and subsequently disposed of the work.²⁶⁹

He discussed his findings with Ihrke and found sympathy with his opinion of the technique. The use of the whole tone scale which Debussy was currently applying was similarly disliked for its limitations. In general Ritchie thought Ihrke's ideas on composition to be secure and sound and that, because of his largely harmonic training he 'expresses himself so logically and lucidly'. Ihrke gave him some of his work including a recording of his *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* played

²⁶⁸ Ritchie completed *A Wedding Anthem* for SATB and Organ in November 1956 for friend, pianist and past School of Music Secretary Dale Mancer.

²⁶⁹ This was disclosed during a conversation with the author.

by the Rochester Symphony and conducted by Howard Hansen.²⁷⁰ Ihrke discussed with Ritchie his forthcoming refresher leave which he planned to spend composing at home. This was a novel concept to Ritchie since New Zealand academics tended to travel abroad for research and further study, but one which had some appeal. Discussions with his fellow musicians at Connecticut led Ritchie to conclude that there was a definite lack of interest shown by educationalists for contemporary music. Teachers did not receive it well and equally composers did not provide suitable new music for use in schools. Many composers, too, were ill-disposed to the music education establishment.

A concert of new compositions hosted by the Brookline Library Music Association including a song set by Read was one of the few contemporary recitals Ritchie attended.²⁷¹ He was not particularly impressed with the programme but considered Read's composition one of the more successful works as his brief synopsis showed:

- (1) Leland H. Proctor – Fantasy for flute & piano. So so
- (2) Robert W. Moevs – duo for oboe & cor anglais. Dreary
- (3) Gregory Tucker – divertimento for violin & piano. Had its moments but the same old stuff.
- (4) Gardner Read – Songs. 'Mature and very pleasant – not well sung'
- (5) Herbert Fronim – Sonata in G maj. Violin & piano. A striking, logical work in modern idiom – very well played by two youngsters. Difficult but well laid out.

²⁷⁰ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 97. A copy of the full score and parts of Ihrke's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* score can be found at the University of Connecticut (UConn) Archives and Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries, Walter R. Ihrke Papers; 'A Guide to the Walter R. Ihrke Papers', *University of Connecticut Archives and Special Collections* <<https://archives.lib.uconn.edu/islandora/object/20002:860132929#toc>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

²⁷¹ Brookline Library Music Association (BLMA) was founded in 1951 to host free concerts. 'Brookline Library Music Association', *The Public Library of Brookline* <<https://www.brooklinelibrary.org/about/brookline-library-music-association/>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

There was one concert of new works which was to Ritchie's liking. This was a National Association for American Composers and Conductors sponsored concert at the Town Hall in 43rd Street, New York.²⁷² The music was much more to his taste than his previous listening experiences: 'This restored my faith in contemporary sanity!'. The works were original but yet displayed a 'logical adherence to and extension of tradition [with a] firm technical grasp'. He particularly enjoyed the artistry and wit of a group of songs performed by mezzo soprano Esther La Berge which were composed and accompanied on the piano by Rudolph Ganz (1877-1972).²⁷³

Ritchie also spent some time in the company of composer and pianist Professor John Woods Duke (1899-1984) who was on the music faculty at Smith College. Duke had a particular interest in songs which provided a good topic of conversation. Both men agreed that in general American composers were not interested in writing for the genre and such works, including Dukes', were seldom broadcast on radio. Chamber opera on the other hand was flourishing due to the Opera Workshop movement. Students learnt the craft of opera production at conservatories and universities by performing suitable small-scale works. This provided the demand for such works, and in fact Duke had composed two chamber operas for this sole purpose.²⁷⁴

Kraehenbuehl was also relatively successful as a composer. Conversely, considering Ritchie's discussion with Dukes, Kraehenbuehl believed this was due to a predominantly choral output. He was also acutely aware that others were not so fortunate. Monopolies such as the American Composers' Alliance (A.C.A.) provided opportunities for its members but non-members struggled to have their works performed or published. The outcome was that audiences only heard programmes of a few works which represented just a small number of the same composers.

²⁷² Ritchie papers, Ritchie, USA diary, p. 119, programme loose inside.

²⁷³ In 1959 at the age of 82 Ganz married Esther La Berge. 'Biography of Rudolph Ganz' in *Inventory of the Rudolph Ganz Papers, 1864-2013*, in *The Newberry* <https://mms.newberry.org/xml/xml_files/Ganz.xml> [accessed 19 July 2019].

²⁷⁴ Ritchie papers, USA diary, p. 96.

Ritchie read and mulled over a number of books on the subject. These included *Modern Music Makers: Contemporary American Composers*, a recent volume (1952) by Madeleine Goss (1892-1960); Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony*, in which Ritchie noted his views on the use of consecutive fifths and octaves that 'The student will avoid...' but which can be employed later '...as soon as inclination, taste and artistic understanding' are reached; and Aaron Copland's *Our New Music: Leading Composers in Europe and America* (1941). Ritchie was, unsurprisingly, keenly interested in Copland's proclamation of Piston's music: 'It sets a level of craftsmanship that is absolutely first-rate in itself and provides a standard of reference by which every other American's work may be judged'.

Following his attendance at a number of recitals and learning first-hand about the American composer, Ritchie formed a view on the relationship between listener and musical creator. As previously stated, audience behaviour was markedly different to that in New Zealand and Britain, with chatter seemingly acceptable during performances. Further, there appeared to be sufficient audience numbers to cater for both standard repertoire as well as the works of composers who pursued new trends from central Europe.

Although the latter attracted a comparatively small number of followers of around two to three hundred of friends, students, acquaintances, 'pseudo-patrons, and quasi-dilettantes', this was sufficient to provide a forum for composers preoccupied with twelve-tone music, clusters and atonality.²⁷⁵ They could therefore exert influence albeit, as Ritchie thought, 'unwittingly, and through the composer's mind'.²⁷⁶ The large concert-halls and churches attracted the majority of listeners who enjoyed works by Barber, Copland, Piston, Harris and Menotti which, according to Ritchie, pointed to enjoyment of music based on 'logic and the heart' rather than the 'merciless "nut-following" of 12 note counterpoint and harmony'.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 127.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

Ritchie concluded that there were five categories of composers that featured in American music life:

1. Ground-breakers of European style influenced by Schoenberg, Bartók, Hindemith or Berg using atonality, whole-tone, twelve note row and clusters – not heard as characteristically American. Included in this group is Francetti, Gardner Read, Vincent Persichetti, William Schuman, Robert Moevs, Gregory Tucker.
2. Composers of functional but ‘intelligible’ music for television, film and music for schools: William Schuman (television documentary), Randall Thompson (*Alleluia*) and Aaron Copland (ballet music).
3. Composers of new music with its roots in tradition and a trace of American nationalism: Walter Piston, Roy Harris, Roger Sessions, Charles Ives, Francis Donovan, Barber and, to some extent, Copland.
4. The professional editor cum composer of ‘sentimental, chordal, quasi-religious’ music who infiltrates certain publishing houses that are concentrated on churches and schools: Walter Ehret, James Allen Dash, Harry Simone, Ringwald and McCormick.²⁷⁸
5. The ‘Musical’ composer: Gershwin, Herbert and Hammerstein and likened to Johann Strauss’ and Mozart’s light material of previous eras.

Referring to the third type, Ritchie wrote: ‘it is this group which boasts the more individual thinkers and the cleaner originality [...]. It is certainly significant that this is the group which are listened to by the general concert going public when they get the chance.’

Reflection and Final Days in the USA

In early January Ritchie made his way to Boston once more and on to Harvard’s Music Department for a pre-arranged meeting with Piston. This was to be the highlight of his time away and he was looking forward to it enormously. Ritchie had decided that there was no doubt that Piston was ‘the man in American

²⁷⁸ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, pp. 98-99. Ritchie labelled these as the ‘law of quick returns group’ but a ‘noteworthy feature of American life’.

composition today'.²⁷⁹ Piston drove them down Concord Avenue to his home at Somerset Street on the hill near Belmont for lunch followed by an afternoon discussing music.²⁸⁰ This had been Piston's home for a number of years and between this and his summer residence in Vermont, he had to date completed six symphonies, four string quartets and a number of other works. The large study complete with centrally situated Steinway grand piano exhibited signs of work throughout with countless scores visible – Webern, Ravel and of course Piston. Piston provided his own fair copies to publishers and his artistry and attention to detail was evident in the flawless manuscripts. The afternoon did not disappoint as Piston talked about his early life, education, travel abroad, noted musicians, conducting, recordings, and his own and others' compositions.

By mid-January Ritchie's stay at Connecticut was coming at an end. Time spent in classes, discussing music matters, listening and observing at various institutions was mostly over but Ritchie utilised any available time until his departure to finalise arrangements of scheduled visits to a number of universities on his way to the port. His last music outing at Connecticut was arranged at a farewell party for Ritchie which had been organised by Smitty. There he met Raymond Dvorak (1900-1982), Director of Bands at the University of Wisconsin.²⁸¹ Ritchie liked Dvorak immensely and was interested to learn that he knew of New Zealand composer and bandmaster Alex Lithgow, and was a personal friend of Percy Grainger. Dvorak had been invited by Smitty and Connecticut's Director of Bands, Al Gillespie, to run a band clinic the following day.²⁸² Ritchie was pleased to attend the session and enjoyed observing Dvorak as he discussed rehearsal techniques and demonstrated peripheral vision and conducting.

²⁷⁹ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, letter to Anita, 1 January 1957.

²⁸⁰ Ritchie noted Somerset Avenue but indications are that it was Somerset Street. 'Harvard University to Somerset St, Belmont, MA 02478, USA', *Google Maps* <<https://www.google.co.nz/maps/dir/Harvard+University,+Cambridge,+MA+02138,+USA/Somerset+Street,+Belmont,+MA>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

²⁸¹ 'The Dvorak Era', *The University of Wisconsin Marching Band* <<http://badgerband.com/the-dvorak-era/>> [accessed 16 July 2019].

²⁸² 'Allan Gillespie, 71; Director of UConn Bands for 25 Years', *Hartford Courant*, 13 October 1997 <<https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-xpm-1997-10-13-9710130151-story.html>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

Ritchie's first stop on the three week San Francisco-bound trip was Rochester to visit the Eastman School of Music. With three days scheduled he had sufficient time to converse with staff, observe a woodwind ensemble rehearsal and attend an evening recital by the Rochester Symphony Orchestra. He first met Edward Easley, the director's assistant and admissions director, and later the director Howard Hanson, associate director Allen McHose, musicologist Warren Fox, Eugene Selhorst, Frederick (Freddie) Fennell, conductor of the Eastman bands, and Clair W. Van Ausdall, manager of Kilbourne Hall.²⁸³ McHose was the author of one of the text books used at Canterbury and he and Ritchie had a long discussion on counterpoint. Ritchie thought Fox somewhat eccentric but worked incredibly hard and Ritchie was touched when he presented him with Oliver Strunk's *Source Materials in Music History*. Hanson was highly regarded by his staff and his importance at Eastman and indeed to Rochester was apparent as was his championing of American contemporary music. Ritchie found him to be 'an indefatigable, charming, learned man'.²⁸⁴

Ritchie's visit to the University of Michigan followed before a stop at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The university was on vacation but he looked over the school of music facilities before spending the afternoon with Charles Leonhard, professor of music education. Where applied music had once been the focus at Illinois, three quarters of current undergraduate students were destined for teaching while sixty per cent of the graduate students were in music education. Additionally, he spent an enjoyable session with composer and pianist Gordon Binkerd (1916-2003) talking about music and listening to some excellent tape recordings of the university orchestra. A pleasant dinner hosted by Margaret Erlanger who led the dance programme at Illinois and who had been a Fulbright visiting lecturer at Otago University in 1953 rounded off the day.

From there Ritchie travelled to Chicago and the Northwestern University at Evanston. The staff treated Ritchie extremely well, booking him into a top hotel

²⁸³ Van Ausdall was a promoter and producer of classical records.

²⁸⁴ Ritchie papers, Ritchie USA diary, p. 213.

for the two nights of his stay and ensuring his every need was attended to. He was taken to a rehearsal of *Carmen* by the Students Opera Workshop and while the University orchestra was not the absolute best Ritchie had heard during his time in the States, the standard was so high that it ‘would show all but the Nat Orch the way to go’.²⁸⁵ Having performed *Bohème* and *Butterfly* in previous years, the hope was that demand would increase to the point that a Chair in Opera could be established. Ritchie also attended a number of other musical events: an excellent mezzo soprano student recital, a band rehearsal with John P. Paynter, the university’s Chamber Orchestra directed by Anthony Donato, and a rehearsal of the Chicago Symphony under Beecham.

After a stopover with relatives of Yingling in Denver which incorporated a school visit and concert with Denver’s director of music education, John Taggart Roberts, Ritchie made his way to Salt Lake City. He met University of Utah’s head of dance, Dr Elizabeth Hayes and New Zealander, Robin Newick who had studied in New Zealand, and was now at Utah on a Fulbright Scholarship for her Masters under Hayes. Ritchie accompanied the two women to three performances: a modern dance class in the morning; a Tabernacle organ recital at noon; and an evening concert by the Utah Symphony Orchestra at the Mormon Tabernacle.²⁸⁶ The orchestra was very good but unremarkable and Ritchie, who was extremely tired by this time, dozed intermittently. He was woken out of his fatigue by the thrilling playing of soloist, Clifford Curzon, an outstanding pianist whose rendition of Beethoven’s G Major Concerto was superb.

Ritchie’s last week was spent at Oakland, California. He visited a number of schools as well as Mills College where Margaret Nielsen was soon to begin postgraduate studies, the University of California, and San Francisco State Teachers’ College. He heard several choir and instrumental rehearsals and performances, and was highly impressed with the quality of singing and playing, the maturity of the students, and the dedication and expertise of the teachers.

²⁸⁵ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, letter to Anita, 29 January 1957.

²⁸⁶ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, letter to Anita, 7 February 1957.

Nonetheless music educators such as Karl Ernst expressed their concern that music education in schools was not inclusive, and that excellence in performance was mostly due to those who undergo private tuition. For many, too, music remained within the confines of school life and did not continue into adulthood and communities.

Ritchie rose early on his last day in the States to pay a short visit to Oakland Technical High School and arrived just in time for the school orchestra's 8.00 a.m. practice. It was an average public school, yet it boasted a fully complemented orchestra. Ritchie was invited to conduct while the orchestra played the first movement of Dvořák's *New World Symphony* which he enjoyed immensely. The students were well-trained and receptive to his directing, and they managed creditable renditions of both this and the other work in progress, Gordon Jacob's *Fantasia on an Alleluia Hymn*. After a brief stop at Silver Burdett publishers Ritchie arrived at port to board the ship one hour before its due sailing time. The trip home was a welcome relief from the hectic schedule of the previous few weeks and he had time to reflect on his observations, commentary, performances, and discussions he had engaged in with academics, musicians and administrators.

The Conservatorium Question

Conservatorium training had long been a topic of debate in New Zealand and one which Ritchie became aware of soon after his arrival at Canterbury. On 5 April 1950, he was one of a number of musicians who attended a reception in the Mayor's Room hosted by the Christchurch Civic Music Council in honour of British born musician Dr. Edgar Bainton (1880-1956). Bainton had moved from England to Australia in 1934 after accepting a position with the New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music. Having retired from his Directorship at the Conservatorium in 1946, he had subsequently been guest or temporary conductor for the National Orchestra New Zealand Broadcasting Service for a period of six

months between 1948 and 1949 following Anderson Tyrer's departure.²⁸⁷ By invitation he had returned to New Zealand in 1950 to fulfil a further conducting commission of around three months with the National Orchestra before the arrival of newly appointed conductor Michael Bowles, and was in Christchurch with the Orchestra for a recital in the Civic Theatre.

Additionally, he had agreed to adjudicate the 'Competitions in Musical Compositions' which were being held as part of the wider Canterbury Centennial celebrations (August 1950- July 1951). Bainton was an advocate for conservatorium training, a view which he expressed in an interview during his visit to Christchurch. He agreed with 'many leading musical authorities' who had spoken to him in New Zealand that there was an urgent need for the establishment of a Conservatorium in the country. Citing Sydney and Melbourne, the benefits were that orchestras had a continuous supply of players to draw from and any replacements needed could be found quickly from current students or graduates. In the same way, a music conservatorium in New Zealand could feed into the National Orchestra and thus secure its future. Since he had observed great enthusiasm for orchestral music in New Zealand over recent months, Bainton believed that the time was right to pursue such a venture.

In mid-January 1953 Vernon Griffiths arrived back to the University from refresher leave in Britain where he had been studying the development of contemporary music and trends in music education. An article published in the *Press* in December 1952 provided some insight into Griffiths's findings on modern music education and performance during his time away. In particular he spoke of concern for the large number of New Zealand musicians studying and performing overseas whose keenness to return to their homeland was not matched by the economic reality of life as a practising musician. He believed that New Zealand was missing out on these young musicians who could contribute positively to its cultural future. He expressed urgency in the establishment of

²⁸⁷ 'Dr Edgar Bainton, former conductor, dies in Sydney: A humour rare in musicians', *Auckland Star*, 18 April 1957 in *National Library of New Zealand*
<<https://natlib.govt.nz/records/30720406>> [accessed 15 July 2019].

small professional orchestral groups like the Alex Lindsay Orchestra and smaller chamber groups from which the National Orchestra could secure its players.

Of special interest was conservatorium training which had continued to be a topic under discussion without resolution. In 1951 attendees at the Federation of Societies of Registered Music Teachers of New Zealand conference put forward a recommendation that one or more of the existing music departments within the university colleges should establish conservatorium training but no progress was made to further this. Griffiths discussed the topic with Sir George Dyson, principal of the Royal College of Music, Sir Reginald Thatcher, director of the Royal Academy of Music, and Dr. Greenhouse Allt, principal of Trinity College of Music. He gathered sufficient knowledge from these sources to enable him to form a view and compile a report which considered three methods – centralized, de-centralised, or local centres – on introducing conservatorium training in New Zealand. Griffiths spoke to the Civic Music Council soon after his return: ‘I am determined to have a conservatorium in New Zealand [...]. It is the most important agency in musical progress’.

Griffiths had visited several conservatoriums including those at the universities of Reading, Cardiff and Aberystwyth where conservatoire teaching took place alongside general courses within the music department. Griffiths believed that this model, rather than the founding of a separate establishment, would suit New Zealand and proposed that one of the four colleges in New Zealand should allow it. Further, he suggested that it could only serve New Zealand well to strengthen its ties with Britain because the alternative was the American influence.

He also disputed the rose tinted view of New Zealanders who believed that British music alone was beyond reproach, advising that New Zealanders could hold their own as performers and musicians. Whilst he had attended some excellent recitals during his travels, not all performances by esteemed orchestras were flawless: hesitant starts and untidy endings featured amongst them. Griffiths appealed to New Zealanders to value the achievements of their own countrymen and women and acknowledge that Britain could also learn from New Zealand. In particular, he had not found any establishment to compare with the Dunedin Technical College.

Griffiths's subsequent report on a conservatorium in music, published in two parts in the *Press*, left readers in no doubt as to his preferred option and why:

‘DECENTRALISATION OF TRAINING SUGGESTED’ and ‘A CONVENIENT AND ECONOMICAL SCHEME’. Griffiths believed that the costs in setting up a new centralised conservatorium in Wellington would be prohibitive and that by necessity, not only would this require a building which would house teaching spaces, practice rooms, a concert hall, library and offices, but well-equipped, inexpensive student accommodation would also need to be erected. As far as staffing for such a venture was concerned, Griffiths asked ‘are not the necessary teachers of orchestral instruments available already in the capital?’.²⁸⁸ Further, the ‘full opportunities for students to live and work together’ which overseas students deemed of the highest priority would be accomplished by offering such training within existing established departments. Griffiths persisted in his quest for conservatorium training over several years writing further reports on the subject: *A Scheme for Conservatorium Training inside the Normal Organisation of the Music Department of Canterbury University College* in September 1956 and *The Case for a National Decentralised University Conservatorium* in August 1959.

Towards the end of Griffiths's time as Professor of Music in March of 1961, a letter was sent to the Vice-Chancellor and Rector, Dr. Llewellyn, requesting the establishment of a small conservatorium of music attached to the music department at Canterbury at which violin, viola and cello would be taught. It was proposed that the existing part-time lecturers and University Trio members David Stone, Elizabeth Cook and Thomas Rogers become full-time lecturers to facilitate this. In 1962 as the University of Canterbury entered a new phase of independence with the dissolution of the University of New Zealand, Ritchie replaced Griffiths as head of music and immersed himself in the conservatorium debate, continuing to make submissions and discuss possibilities with like-minded colleagues. Ritchie had been part of a department which saw music-making as part of its role for over a decade and securing the Alard Quartet for a residency at Canterbury from 1963 went some way to enhancing the department's ability to offer practical

²⁸⁸ Ritchie papers, Conservatorium Controversy folder, report from *Press* [n.d.].

lessons but unlike Auckland, was yet to offer any credits toward a diploma for performance.

In August Ritchie wrote to Papanui Member of parliament H.J. Walker outlining a proposal that would see all four universities offer a 'small, thoroughly-planned course such as will start at the University of Canterbury next year' in order to provide specialist music training for performers. In October Ritchie wrote to Canterbury's registrar, Garth Turbott, and asked that a Notice of Motion be put to the Professorial Board, proposing to move:

That the Professorial Board request the University Council to support the view that, in the best interests of this country's musical welfare, the organisation of advanced executant training in music should be encouraged to develop regionally and not by the establishment of one national institution.²⁸⁹

In the body of the report which accompanied the motion Ritchie presented arguments against a national conservatorium based on the country's small population and economy, and its geographical spread. Additionally, he refuted the view of those who favoured the scheme that such an institution was necessary in order to provide players for the National Orchestra since replacement rates were low – estimated at four per annum – and the existing Cadet Training Scheme could adequately satisfy demand. He also stressed that he was not concerned with any adverse effects such a move might have on Canterbury University, rather he was motivated to support the best interests of music in New Zealand.

Trinity College of Music examiner Brisbane based Dr W. Lovelock who was in Christchurch as an outside assessor at Canterbury University, also voiced his support for regional training rather than a national conservatorium, views which were published in the *Press* on the 17 November. Lovelock was opposed to a National Conservatorium in New Zealand on the grounds of its population: that it

²⁸⁹ Ritchie papers, Conservatorium Controversy folder.

would be unable to attract teachers of ‘the very highest calibre’ (and hence students would still need to travel overseas to further their learning); that the provinces would lose out; and that such training should also be available to non-professionals. He praised the development of music at Auckland and Canterbury and was adamant that any such venture should be kept out of the government’s hands: ‘The trouble is that such a set-up is hamstrung by rules and regulations which you can’t apply to art... You expect a university to be broad-minded and let musicians direct music’. Two additional examiners, Mary Tweedie and Charles Jenkins, expressed their dismay at talk of a conservatorium in New Zealand: ‘You cannot denude the provinces of their talent with out [sic] resulting aridity...’ and ‘The teaching of music in isolation is to be deplored...there is nothing better than learning it under the broader cultural influence of the university’.²⁹⁰

The *New Zealand Listener*, too, showed interest in the topic, publishing an article by Owen Jensen: ‘The word ‘national’ has something of a mystique about it, and it has something which regional schools might take a while to acquire. It has the quality of a status symbol. Status symbols have a wide appeal and they appeal especially strongly to public bodies who [sic] dispense public monies. It is easier to support something that can be pin-pointed than the amorphous but probably more fruitful development represented by the regional idea’. Quoting this paragraph in his submitted report to central government Ritchie wrote: ‘The fact that until a few months ago, the writer of this article was a supporter of what he now opposes, is significant’.

Submissions were also made by other music departments. In forwarding his report to the Ministries of Education and Internal Affairs, Charles Nalden of Auckland University noted that all agreed a conservatorium or training centre was needed in New Zealand but consensus could not be reached on how this would be achieved. While some supported a national centre (in Wellington), those from other centres, including Auckland, believed that the most effective method was a regional scheme. Those of this view, however, were divided as to whether the latter should

²⁹⁰ *Press*, 17 November 1962.

be independent or integrated within the city's university. University of Otago Professor Peter Platt's report on the other hand was less concerned with the 'Wellington and others' debate and instead was of the view that due to the small population, a single central national conservatorium was preferred. This report thus focussed on how to attract the best teachers and provide positions for graduates. Platt later attended a meeting in Wellington along with a deputation made up of members from the Federation of Chamber Music Societies, Fred Page, the Minister of Education William Tennent, and Education Department Director of Schools, Arnold Campbell, at which he asked that in light of the differing views, and since it was generally agreed advanced training in music was urgently needed, a committee be set up to investigate and determine the best way this could be done.

In November the Minister of Education announced what was already plain – that there was no doubt that additional facilities were needed for advanced music training but that opinion was divided as to how this should be attained. To that end a musical advisory committee was established by the Arts Advisory Council to consider the various options. The music fraternity waited in vain for a decision by the Ministry on the conservatorium matter and in early 1963 Owen Jensen contributed further to the discussion with comments which were published in the *Evening Post* newspaper with the heading: 'It's Time For Action on Music Conservatorium Proposal'. Jensen was against a central national centre, instead his views aligned with those who believed that the answer lay in further development of performance within the four music departments.²⁹¹

Still without a decision in sight, musicians around the country continued to wait and debate. In September 1963 the Music Teachers' Registration Board of New Zealand wrote to each of the four university music department professors seeking their views in light of differing opinions on the matter within its own body. Ritchie's reply left them in no doubt as to what he thought and he expressed his

²⁹¹ Ritchie papers, Conservatorium Controversy folder, loose cutting [n.d.].

surprise at any division since ‘implicit in the idea of promoting a conservatorium is the element of adverse criticism of the work of the majority of private teachers’.

From 23-24 October 1963, a two day ‘Conference of University Music Departments’ (or Inter-Universities Music Department Conference) ‘Conservatorium or Regional Schools?’ was held in Wellington. Present were the four music Professors: Page, Platt, Ritchie, and Nalden, as well as Dr Steele, Messrs Farquhar, Harris, Hawkey, Rive, and Till. Its main focus was the regional versus national conservatorium issue; however other agenda items were also discussed and resolved. One item which took little time and consideration was whether the current fifty per cent mark for harmony in both the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Music Degrees could be relaxed – a unanimous vote against any such change was noted. A greater time was spent on the administering and content of the aural tests for University Entrance and Scholarships Examinations. After discussions the conference decided on the parameters of the music paper which comprised three parts – harmony (50%), history and analysis (25%), and aural (25%). An original proposal by Nalden for the tests to be taken at individual schools was withdrawn and instead it was determined that of several options proposed, students would take these at local centres at the same time around the country. A less contentious issue put forward was the matter of visiting lecturers and research scholars for the four music departments and to that end a list of thirteen names was drawn up by the conference: Copland, Piston, Messiaen, Denis Stevens, Maxwell Davis, Dart, Westrup, Boulanger, Martin Bernstein, Lucas Foss, Peter Evans, Stockhausen and Ivor Keys.

According to the written report minuted by the conference chairman Charles Nalden, the conference unanimously supported regional development as a means to provide advanced music training and agreed that those advances which Auckland and Canterbury had already made were positive steps towards this goal. Conference attendees believed that training within a university would provide students the broader and more liberal outlook needed, and that it would produce both performers and the teachers which were crucially needed in New Zealand. In response to the arguments of those who were in favour of a single central

conservatorium, the conference believed that any shortage of orchestral players was likely down to poor salaries, and that the establishment of such a centre would not preclude the most gifted players from furthering their studies overseas since such experience would always be deemed essential.

The full report and accompanying letter was then posted to the Minister of Education in what was hoped to be the end of the debate as indicated in a letter to Ritchie in early 1964: 'With this conference behind us, I do trust that the Conservatorium issue will make no more of those deep inroads into one's time!' As history played out, a music conservatorium never eventuated. Universities however set up performance-based degrees which allowed privately taught students to further their instrumental studies post High School. The training orchestra which was established in Wellington aided in providing players for the National Orchestra which today is similarly achieved by the Youth Orchestra. National and regional orchestras also source members from other countries.

Chapter 6: Performer in the Community

Ritchie's first community position was as conductor of the Addington Workshops Choir, a role he occupied from 1946 to 1956.²⁹² This presented him with a fertile environment for composing and especially arranging within certain parameters, a skill which he used throughout his composing life. Ritchie recalls that Vernon Griffiths was an advocate of the working man's involvement in music and he actively encouraged the formation of community choirs. In 1946 Griffiths gave a lecture under the umbrella of the Canterbury Workers' Educational Association (WEA) from which a singing group evolved. Griffiths's natural enthusiasm for music-making fuelled by his belief that the workers' music was an expression of its culture would likely have encouraged the men's involvement.

Employees of the Addington Railway Workshops were invited to come together to participate in some singing during their allotted half hour lunch break while Griffiths directed and provided the material in the form of some simple songs. Perhaps Griffiths had Ritchie in mind as the group's director at the outset or it might have been a fortuitous happening, but soon after the WEA lecture he spoke to Ritchie of his brilliant idea that Ritchie could go to the Railway Workshops, conduct the group and perhaps make a choir out of it. Ritchie keenly obliged but quite quickly realised that there needed to be an additional incentive for the individuals to turn up regularly for the Tuesday practices in order for it to succeed. According to Ritchie they 'persuaded the Minister of Railways who was a very famous man, Bob Semple, to allow the chaps half an hour off extra at Tuesday lunchtime so they could eat their lunch, and have a rehearsal'.

It was a wholly successful scheme all round. With the additional paid half hour recreational time a large number of men were only too happy to attend the weekly sessions; Ritchie had a regular set of singers who could be relied on and whom he was able to train to a reasonable standard, and the work place became a more

²⁹² John Ritchie, *Interview*, 5 June 2007.

lively and sociable environment. As stated, the repertoire was initially provided by Griffiths, mainly arrangements of traditional English and Scottish songs from the *Dominion Songbooks* but in 1947 Ritchie began contributing to the repertoire with his own arrangements of like-verses and a small number of original compositions. He also became solely responsible for the direction the singers would take, selecting and arranging the songs into three parts. The men were ‘as rough, as tough as anything, wonderful souls [...] anyway, I set to work [...] it was really quite remarkable’.

Such was the musical success of the male voice choir which had only recently emerged from a small singing group that it stole the show when it performed at The Six Towns Festival, a two night programme presented by the Christchurch Civic Music Council on 30 September and 2 October 1948. In fact, according to a newspaper report, the choir spent their usual lunchtime rehearsal recording for the festival recital which was later played to radio audiences. The group was made up of thirty-five men and six women including Anita Ritchie. The women were relative new-comers to the group who sang the descant in Griffiths’s arrangement of *O Mistress Mine* (Shakespeare). Five of the eight songs were Ritchie’s arrangements or compositions. During this period Anita was enjoying regular singing engagements which went beyond renditions of Ritchie’s compositions in local recitals; she was also offered work with musical societies around the country. In late November 1948 during the academic year’s break, the Ritchie family of four travelled south to Invercargill for Anita to join soloists Margaret Woods, Allan Botting and Ross Hewton in a programme of Handel’s *Messiah* presented by the Invercargill Musical Union.

Ritchie furthered his conducting skills with his directorship of the Gloucester Singers between 1947 and 1950.²⁹³ Towards the latter part of 1951 he also took over conducting the Christchurch Liederkränzchen choir from Alfred Worsley (d. 1956) who was by this time in his early seventies. Ritchie’s initial performance with the choir on 25 September was a resounding success with both audience and

²⁹³ Ritchie papers, Confidential Staff Record Card copy, ‘1947-1950 Gloucester Singers, Conductor’.

critics, and his conducting skills and choice of repertoire were praised by the ensuing review.

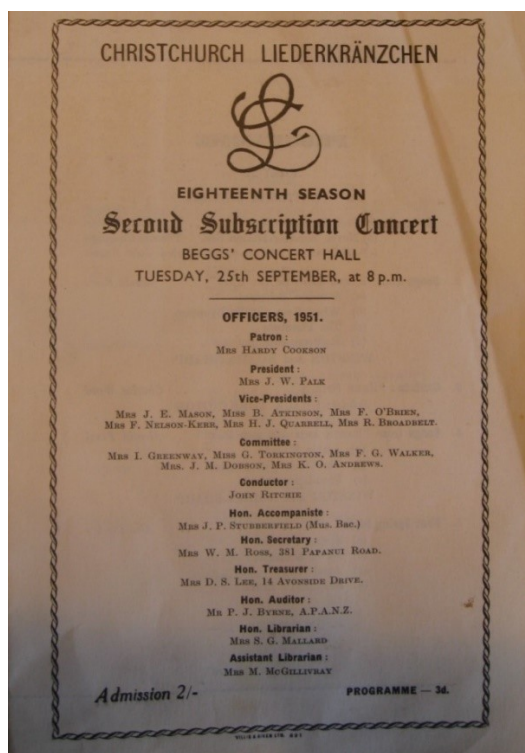


Figure 51: Cover of first programme which Ritchie conducted for the Christchurch Liederkränzchen. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

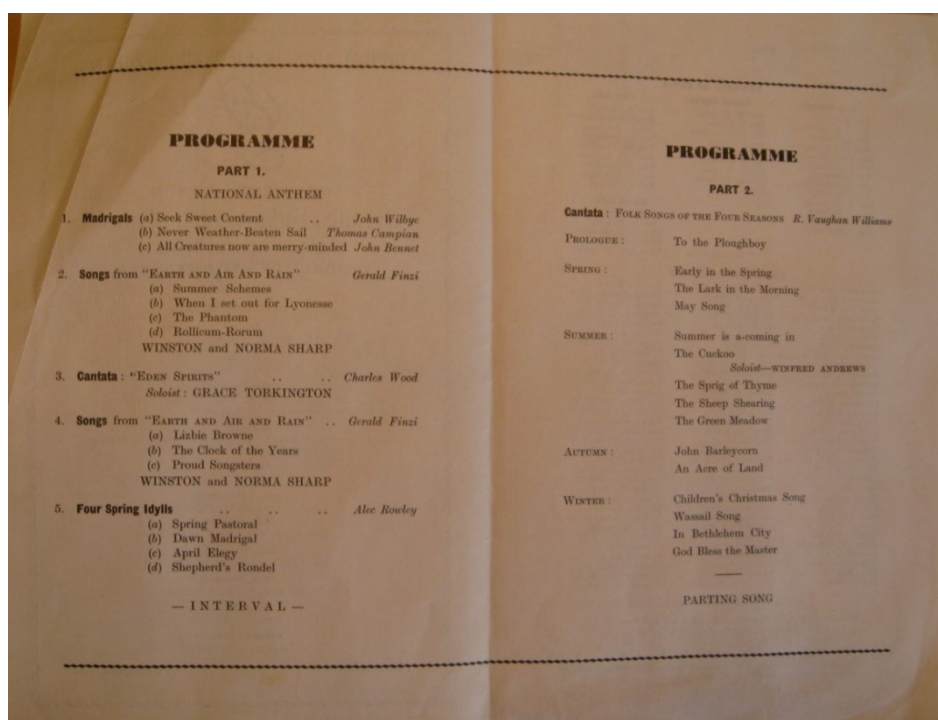


Figure 52: First programme for the Christchurch Liederkränzchen under John Ritchie. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The concert opened with three madrigals by Elizabethan composers John Wilbye, Thomas Campion, and John Bennet while the remaining programme comprised contemporary but traditionally-based British composers; a selection from Gerald Finzi's song cycle *Earth And Air And Rain*, Charles Wood's *Eden Spirits*, Alec Rowley's *Four Spring Idylls*, and Ralph Vaughan Williams's cantata *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons*. Ritchie was a great admirer of Finzi and he was keen to learn as much as he could about his work prior to the performance. He wrote to Finzi asking for details of his life and any additional information about the particular work the choir was performing. Finzi replied with a brief overview then added: 'The main interest about a composer's life is really in his work', and 'every individual conductor brings the thing to life according to his own vision. Your ideas are just as likely to be right as anyone elses'.²⁹⁴

It was a source of pride to Ritchie that he was able to present the Vaughan Williams work so soon after it was published, and he was delighted to relay in an interview during this research that the performance was in fact the cantata's world premiere.²⁹⁵ Ritchie had written to Finzi once more after the concert and enclosed a programme, commenting on its success and how well-received the recital was. Finzi's response was described thus by Ritchie to the researcher: "I'm thrilled," he said, "but not nearly so thrilled as Vaughan Williams was when I told him." He said, "Do you realise, you people did the World Premiere of it?!" Apparently, Vaughan Williams conducted the advertised première in the Royal Albert Hall about ten days later. The documentation shows a somewhat different truth than Ritchie's recollection as illustrated by Finzi's reply acknowledging the programme in a more subdued manner: 'it is cheering to see such enterprise and to note, too, the comparatively short time-lag between the publication of a new work, such as The V. W. and its performance under you.'

²⁹⁴ Ritchie papers, Personal letters folder, letter from Finzi to Ritchie.

²⁹⁵ John Ritchie, *Interviews 6a and 6b*, 3 July 2007.

Finzi's work
at Newbury
Berks.
Nov 15th 1951

Dear Mr Ritchie

It's nice of you to keep me
in touch with what you call
"tit-bits from the antipodes"! But
quite apart from personal interest it
is cheering to see such enterprise
or to note, too, the comparatively
short time-lag between the publication
of a new work, such as the V.W.,
and its performance under you.

Figure 53: Gerald Finzi to Ritchie letter, page 1.
Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

You may like to see a typical
programme of the sort of thing I do
with the local string orchestra, mainly
amateurs.

All good wishes
Yours sincerely
Gerald Finzi.

Figure 54: Gerald Finzi to Ritchie letter, page 2. Used with permission of the
Ritchie family.

The work was in reality written for the first singing festival of the National Federation of Women's Institutes in 1950 and was performed in May of that year at the Royal Albert Hall.²⁹⁶ Nonetheless, it was one of the work's early performances and certainly the first in New Zealand.

Finzi returned Ritchie's gesture by enclosing a programme of his own as conductor of the Newbury String Players on Thursday 22 November at Andover Guildhall.²⁹⁷ The orchestra, which Finzi had founded in 1940, presented a recital of mostly sixteenth and seventeenth-century composers' works although two early twentieth-century composers were also represented; *Concertino for Pianoforte (or Harpsichord) and Strings* by Walter Leigh (1905-1941), and *Serenade* by Swedish composer Dag Wirén (1905-1986). Sadly Finzi had recently been diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease, although it is unlikely that Ritchie was aware of this at the time, and he died just five years later. Ritchie had enormous respect for Finzi and believed that he was one of the greatest British conductors and composers of his time although he conceded that this view was not the consensus of music historians. Just as the Second World War affected Ritchie's personal and professional life, it is thought to have played a part in stalling the momentum of Finzi's musical career and this too resonated with Ritchie.

The performance of Finzi's first major work *Dies Natalis* for solo voice and string orchestra was due to take place at the Three Choirs Festival in 1939; however the event was postponed due to the start of the Second World War and the work was not heard until the festival resumed during peacetime in 1946. The festival featured the Cathedral choirs of Worcester, Gloucester and Hereford Counties and had been an annual event since the early eighteenth century. It showcased many contemporary works, some of which were first performances, and often conducted

²⁹⁶ 'Four Songs for the Four Seasons', *The WI: Inspiring Women* <<https://www.thewi.org.uk/about-the-wi/history-of-the-wi/1950s/folk-songs-for-the-four-seasons>> [accessed 15 July 2019].

²⁹⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie Scrapbook December 1949-May 1952; Gwynneth Reed, 'Newbury String Players', *The Finzi Trust*, <<https://www.geraldfinzi.org/newbury-string-players.html>> [accessed 15 July 2019].

by the composer.²⁹⁸ Twentieth century examples include Elgar's *Gerontius* (1902), Parry's *Beyond these Voices there is Peace* (1908), Delius's *Dance Rhapsody No. 1* (1909), Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* (1910), Holst's *Choral Fantasia* (1931) and Arnold Bax's *The Morning Watch* (1935). In 1986 a parallel event took place thousands of miles away from the Festival's home; Peter Godfrey directed New Zealand's own Three Choirs Festival with the Auckland, Wellington and Napier Cathedral Choirs. It featured a new work by none other than John Ritchie.²⁹⁹

There were other similarities aside from the accident of war and its effect on their careers between Finzi and Ritchie. Finzi was a skilled and active choral writer as was Ritchie; both had composed a major piece for clarinet and orchestra (in Ritchie's case string orchestra) for which they were well-known and which became one of their most enduring works, and both founded an orchestra and composed many of its arrangements at a similar age – Finzi was thirty-nine, Ritchie thirty-seven. Their aims for their respective orchestras were comparable: to provide players in their community the opportunity to perform a range of repertoire including both familiar works and some less well-known, both old and new. Both orchestras travelled outside their main centre to perform in smaller and more remote towns in order that everyone was given the opportunity to hear an orchestral recital. Both orchestras also left a legacy: the Newbury players continued for thirty-nine years – long after Finzi's death – before disbanding, and the John Ritchie String Orchestra in time formed the basis of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra.

It is fairly plain that, irrespective of Finzi's influence, Ritchie looked to England for a model of the best in composition and most choral works performed in Canterbury at the time were composed by Englishmen. New Zealand composers represented were limited to arrangements and new works based on the (tonal) English tradition, and they were praised by the local reviewers for their ability to

²⁹⁸ 'History of the Three Choirs Festival', *Three Choirs Festival* <<https://3choirs.org/about-us/history-of-the-three-choirs-festival/>> [accessed 15 July 2019].

²⁹⁹ This work was *Dominus Firmamentum – The Lord is My Rock*.

create works that were original within the framework of the existing musical systems. The Liederkränzchen recital with the recent compositions of Finzi and Vaughan Williams was adventurous for its time in Christchurch.

Other engagements followed; just eleven days later on 6 October Ritchie conducted the Cantata for the Provincial Towns Festival at the Civic Theatre followed by a Community Choirs Festival on 31 October at the Radiant Theatre with the Addington Workshops Male Voice Choir. The choir, one of six participating together with the Aeolian Choir, (Eric Voyce), Hay's Ltd Choir (Clifton Cook), Risingholme Community Choir (Keith R. Newson), and South Brighton Choral Society (George B. Couch) was noted for its remarkable progress since the previous year under Ritchie's directorship –including some meritorious unaccompanied singing. Ritchie rounded off the year as guest conductor for the Nelson Civic Society's music school event.

Ritchie's conducting schedule for 1952 was increasingly busy at the helm of the three choirs he was now directing – Addington Railway Workshops, Christchurch Liederkränzchen, and the Gloucester Singers of Station 3YA – which involved the selection of works, arrangements, rehearsals, and administrative duties in preparation for performances. Some of the practical organising of recitals and affairs related to finances were overseen by other members of their respective bodies including the Addington Workshops Choir which was run under the Adult Education council. As well as lecturing, the music department staff at Canterbury organised their regular concerts at College Hall. To further consolidate his position as a musical director, Ritchie completed his Licentiate of Trinity College of London in Conducting in 1955, sitting firstly the practical work in July followed by the theory exam in November. He achieved outstanding results of ninety-five per cent for both, the examiner commenting on Ritchie's practical examination thus: 'The fine quality of the singing reflected the ability of the conductor and subsequent tests confirmed the high standard of artistry which was evident at the beginning. This candidate is a musician of distinction'.³⁰⁰

³⁰⁰ Ritchie papers, 'KETC/Dunedin Technical College' folder, examiner's report card.

Together with invitations to adjudicate, Ritchie was regularly asked to conduct for performances by musical groups and for the New Zealand Broadcasting Service. In 1956, he was particularly busy as he was preparing to go on refresher leave overseas but nonetheless he was always willing to accept requests for a number of special events. The Timaru Choral Society was eager to avail itself of his expertise in conducting his own *Then Laugheth the Year* in their September concert and also in September the National Orchestra asked him to conduct two concerts for their South Island tour in Dunedin and Christchurch.

The Birth of the John Ritchie String Orchestra

Ritchie had been planning the formation of an orchestra for several years before it came to fruition but the idea was hampered by the lack of players who met the standard he required. Ritchie wanted players who were already at a professional level to work together as a group to accompany choirs and soloists, perform music which differed from that provided by the National Orchestra, and be the nucleus of a larger ensemble with the addition of woodwind and brass. In 1958 the orchestra which would formally become known as the John Ritchie String Orchestra (JRSO) led by David Stone comprising six violinists, two viola players, two cellists and a bass player began rehearsing for an accompanying role in the Liederkränzchen's October concert. Encouraged by the success of their performance, they began rehearsing in earnest in January the following year.

On the evening of 7 March 1959 the newly formed John Ritchie String Orchestra gave its first official performance.³⁰¹ Tickets for the event were purchased from Begg's music store for the sum of 4s. 5d. plus 7d. tax. It was a much anticipated and well-attended event at the Durham Street Art Gallery and to further enhance the occasion, coffee was available during the interval at which time attendees could view a selection of art works specially chosen to compliment the musical evening.

³⁰¹ Ritchie papers, JRSO box, Accounts book 1959-1960 shows Ritchie's workings for the John Ritchie String Orchestra and includes costs and players' income.

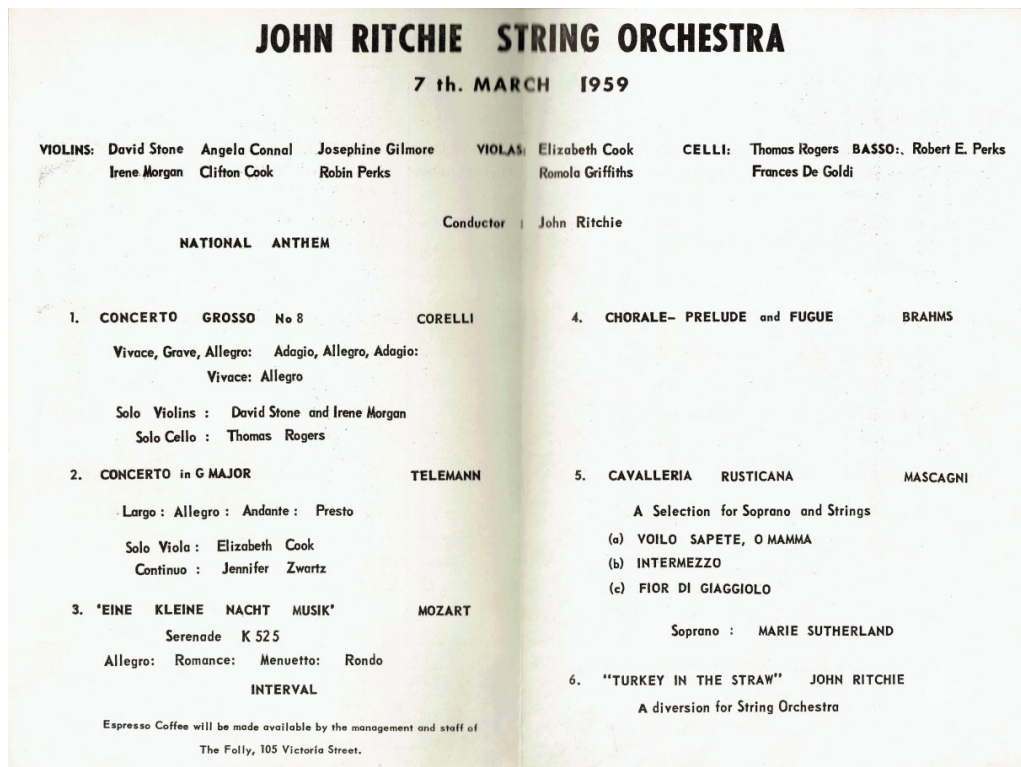


Figure 55: Programme of inaugural concert by the John Ritchie String Orchestra. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The concert began, as was the custom, with the New Zealand National Anthem followed by the programme proper which opened with *Concerto Grosso* No. 8 by Corelli. Telemann's Viola Concerto in G Major, and Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* brought the performance to the end of the first half. The recital continued chronologically by composer after the interval with Brahms' *Chorale, Prelude and Fugue*, and excerpts from *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni, a selection for soprano and strings with soloist Marie Sutherland (later Marie Landis, d. 2019). Ritchie's arrangement of *Turkey in the Straw* rounded off the scheduled works. With the audience asking for more, the orchestra obliged with the well-rehearsed *Chanson de Nuit* by Elgar.

The subsequent review was complimentary: 'New String Orchestra High Standard of Playing' wrote C.F.B. (Charles Foster Browne).³⁰² It was to be hoped that the orchestra would receive continued support after such a successful beginning

³⁰² John Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1959-1960, newspaper clipping [n.d.].

which augured well for future performances. The appraisal continued: 'The playing had precision, clear phrasing, excellent intonation, a ready and balanced response to Mr Ritchie's requirements in expression and a refreshing zest'. The reviewer was equally approving of Ritchie who, he said, 'conducted with that clear judgement in matters of tempi, rhythmic vitality, and tonal values that always marks his direction'.

A succession of performances followed the March opening. In May the orchestra performed with the Liederkränzchen's first 1959 concert which was followed by two performances of Edward German's *Merrie England* (concert version) with the South Brighton Choral Society, firstly at the University of Canterbury Hall on Saturday 13 June and again on 26 June at the North New Brighton Memorial Hall. The soloists included Anita Ritchie who was cast as Bessie Throckmorton along with Elizabeth McCombs (Jill-All-Alone and Queen Elizabeth), Edmund Bohan (Sir Walter Raleigh) and Winston Sharp (The Earl of Essex). The reviews focussed primarily on the performance of the choir and soloists as well as the choral society's conductor Victor Ellena, who directed the event. Mention was made, however, of the orchestra's marked improvement and ability from previous accompanied choral performances which had been marred by poor playing below the standard of the singers. Soon after, the orchestra ably provided the music for a Xavier College production of the *Pirates of Penzance* at the St James Theatre.

On Thursday 22 October 1959 at University Hall, the John Ritchie String Orchestra gave its second solo concert to a large audience. The orchestra had increased in number from eleven to fourteen with a total of eight violinists and three cello players while Michael Toovey provided the continuo on spinet. David Stone remained as leader although there were some personnel changes to the violin section with two of the original players having been replaced; Clifton Cook was unavailable and Josephine Gilmore had been offered a place with the newly established National Youth Orchestra. The programme was made up of two distinct halves; early works were performed in the first half while a twentieth-century offering including Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, Opus 11 (1938) followed after the interval.

The recital included Bach's Concerto for Violin in A Minor with David Stone as soloist, and two Purcell arias; 'Hark! How all things rejoice' (*Fairy Queen*) and Dido's Lament (*Dido and Aeneas*). The New Zealand premiere of Samuel Barber's *Three Songs*, Opus 13 was sung by Anita Ritchie. Reviewer C.H.D. of the *Press* found the programme well-balanced, commending the choice of music although found that the final work, Elgar's *Serenade for String Orchestra*, was somewhat overshadowed by Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, which preceded it. Both soloists were praised for their musicality and technical skill in the execution of their respective works and the orchestra was equally applauded for its polished playing: 'Those who went to hear the John Ritchie String Orchestra last night found themselves in Quality Street, for there was at this concert the hallmark of elite music-making.' Ritchie was singled out for his 'inspired leadership' and his 'enterprise [which] cannot be too highly commended'.³⁰³ C.F.B. too extolled the evening's performance, describing the standard of the orchestra as 'astonishing' and the experience 'thrilling'.

The orchestra rounded off a successful year with three December concerts as well as a series of school concerts at Avonside Girls' High School, Shirley Intermediate and Shirley Boys' High School. The first of the public performances took place at Christchurch Teachers College on Wednesday 2 December. The programme encompassed repertoire from earlier performances including Barber's *Adagio for Strings* and two movements of Telemann's Viola Concerto as well as newly prepared works. The latter were two folk song arrangements by British composer Gerrard Williams (1888-1947) and Ritchie's arrangement of *Orchestral Study of a Well-known Melody*. Ritchie's signature piece *Turkey in the Straw* completed the evening's recital. Three days later on 5 December the orchestra performed at University Hall. This Saturday concert was a more formal occasion and, aside from Corelli's Concerto Grosso No. 8 (commonly known as *The Christmas Concerto*), and the two Gerrard Williams's arrangements, consisted of works which had not yet been aired by the orchestra.

³⁰³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1959-1960, review by C.H.D., newspaper cutting [n.d.].

Programme notes prepared by Ritchie and typed on a single sheet of paper were made available to the audience. Mention was made of the augmentation of the orchestra in order to perform Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto* and the five required additional players: Trevor Hutton (flute), Jack Goldsmith (oboe), Ross McKeich (bassoon), William Turner (horn), and Brian Barrett (timpani). The programme was of special importance to both players and audience for what was to be the first New Zealand performance of Shostakovich's *Concerto for Pianoforte, Trumpet and String Orchestra*, Opus 3. Ritchie had particular interest in acquiring the work following his visit to the United States the previous year. The score and parts, which had been hand written in the Soviet Union, had been hired from the Edwin A. Fleisher Memorial Music Collection in Philadelphia and only one performance was permitted before the music was to be returned. It was this and another twentieth-century work, Debussy's *Dances Sacree et Profane* (1904), which the programme notes referred to: 'Apart from the tonal impressionism [...], there is a well-defined classical aspect to much of his music [...]. [B]oth [dances] have that spell-binding beauty which is uniquely Debussy', Ritchie wrote. For the *Concerto*, the listener was invited to enjoy Shostakovich's sense of humour in his writing which was 'a combination of warm lyricism and irrepressible humour [...]'. The first two movements are particularly rewarding [...] in spite of a sly dig at Rossini [...]. The short third movement, too, is rich in Bach-like preludes.³⁰⁴

The recital was highly praised by C.F.B and C.H.D in the ensuing critiques. 'Outstanding Concert' and 'Exciting Music' ran the headlines. It was suggested that the large audience enjoyed a performance which superseded the previous excellent playing of the orchestra and it appeared there was little in the programme to fault. The single criticism came from C.F.B. who felt that Schubert's *Minuet*, Grieg's *Death of Ase* and Gerrard Williams's two arrangements were an anti-climax after the stunning Haydn *Trumpet Concerto* but this was not related to any lapse in the performers' playing which was exemplary. The soloists too were given glowing reports and mention was made of Maurice

³⁰⁴ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1959-1960.

Till's expressive and masterly piano playing and the 'glorious tone', and 'beautiful timing' of the trumpet by Ken Smith.

The technical excellence of the John Ritchie String Orchestra players too was remarked on and the lead playing of David Stone, Irene Morgan and Thomas Rogers as soloists in the Corelli *Concerto Grosso* No. 8 was highly commended. Ritchie was not left out of the accolades as he showed 'characteristic enterprise' in delivering such an exciting and stimulating programme by players who were able to 'unfold the charming qualities of Mr Ritchie's most sensitive interpretations' at tempi which were always 'perfectly chosen'. Heartfelt thanks were expressed by C.H.D at the conclusion of his summary: 'To Mr Ritchie we offer our thanks for a magnificent evening of music-making. Could we not have the whole programme all over again? It should pack the Civic Theatre to the doors'.³⁰⁵

The programme for the schools on 8 December consisted of five to six shorter works and part works only, demonstrating Ritchie's ability to understand the need to modify an approach to a programme depending on the circumstances, a skill learnt by his personal early experience in music and later teacher training. Opening with *Entry of Queen of Sheba*, his own *Turkey in the Straw* and Percy Grainger's *Mock Morris* were the two final pieces, ensuring the students were left energised by these toe-tapping upbeat tunes. The final John Ritchie String Orchestra performance of 1959 took place at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday 13 of December. The orchestra once again played the Corelli Christmas Concerto and the Christmas *Cantata Pastorale per la Nativita di nostro Signore Jesu Cristo* by Scarlatti with Anita Ritchie as soloist. The concert was recorded by the New Zealand Broadcasting Service (NZBS) and aired by 3YC on Christmas Day.

The orchestra began 1960 with two programmes for 3YA in February. These were of reasonably short duration consisting of seven light traditional and contemporary pieces and included such items as *Mock Morris* (Grainger), *Eine*

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

Kleine I (Mozart), *Basse-Danse* from Peter Warlock's *Capriol Suite* (1926) and *Turkey in the Straw*. The orchestra's first public performance of the year was in April at the Civic Theatre and this was also broadcast by 3YC. The orchestra was augmented with two flutes and two oboes and known as the Studio Players, and performed Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the Royal Christchurch Musical Society conducted by Robert Field-Dodgson. Once again Anita Ritchie was soloist along with Valda McCracken (contralto), Edmund Bohan and Anson Austin (tenors), Winston Sharp (baritone) and Donald Jack (bass). The recital was very well received and reviewed. The choir and soloists were of a very high standard and apart from the occasional passage where the accompaniment was a little too exuberant for the soloists, the orchestra performed admirably under the excellent leadership of David Stone.

It was around this time that Griffiths once more urged for a music conservatorium in Christchurch. Coinciding with the John Ritchie String Orchestra's early success, it also appears to have been in response to a movement aimed at establishing a centralised institute in Wellington. Griffiths supported the National Orchestra and believed that much was owed to its two early conductors, Anderson Tyrer and Michael Bowles; however he was also aware that a single entity based in one centre drew talented players and teachers away from other main centres and hence their wider communities. He suggested that Christchurch could begin regional conservatoire teaching based at the new music department at Ilam so that students could also take advantage of the theoretical classes on offer. In time it was supposed that the four main centres would host conservatories within or close to their respective music departments thus ensuring music was retained in all of New Zealand including the rural population. He believed that the disestablishment of the 3YA orchestra had left choral societies without the means of providing a satisfactory accompaniment to their performances but that the John Ritchie String Orchestra could fill that void in the interim. This highlighted the need to retain teaching and performing locally.

Rumblings to promote the establishment of a full orchestra in Christchurch were heard in several quarters and in the Christchurch City Council's May meeting, a

motion was put forward by Councillor Connal of the Estimates Committee to grant one thousand pounds for the formation of a symphony orchestra in the city. This was to be separate from the seven hundred and fifty pound grant currently paid to the Civic Music Council, and the John Ritchie String Orchestra which was now well established would form the nucleus of such an orchestra. Councillor H. G. Hay seconded the motion with the words: 'As a lover of music I think this is a move in the right direction. One thousand pounds is not a large sum. There are many cities overseas which pay more to their orchestras.'

The confirmed proposal outlined that while the Council supported the venture and would provide the said sum for the establishment of an orchestra of professional standard, it was not their business to run it. Rather, it was hoped that the choral societies along with the Civic Music Council and its affiliates would work together to advance the proposal. The sum of three hundred and fifty pounds for the next two years was confirmed with the understanding that the choral societies would also discuss the notion of contributing funds. In addition, State support would be requested. Representatives who confirmed their support were recorded as Messrs A. W. Mann (Christchurch Choral Society), Clifton Cook, (Union of Graduates in Music), L. F. de Berry for the Royal Christchurch Music Society and Harmonic Society, and D.H. Hogan for the Christchurch Orchestral Society.³⁰⁶ It was noted that the likely name would be the Christchurch Civic Orchestra. With such seeming goodwill and need for the orchestra, its success might have been assumed, but this was not to be the case.

The John Ritchie String Orchestra continued to perform throughout 1960. Following their recordings and early April recital, they performed the first of the Christchurch Chamber Music Society's concert series for the year on 26 April followed by a recital with the Christchurch Liederkränzchen one week later. In May they accompanied the Christchurch Harmonic Society's performance of Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with new conductor and close friend of Ritchie, William (Bill) Hawkey. The Chamber Music programme comprised some familiar works;

³⁰⁶ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1959-1960, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

Handel's *The Entry of the Queen of Sheba*, Barber's *Adagio for Strings* and Shostakovich's *Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and Strings* but some new works were also included. These ranged from the sixteenth-century *Fiori Musicali* by Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643), Corelli's *Concerto Grosso*, Opus 6 No. 3 to the twentieth-century works *Quiet City* by Aaron Copland with soloists Ken Smith and Jack Goldsmith and *Kleine Serenade* (1908) by Swedish composer Lars-Erik Larsson which was also repeated for the *Liederkränzchen* concert.

Two reviewers, M.T.D. and M.H.T. (Michael Henry Toovey) opined similarly about the performance. Both noted some minor intonation flaws from trumpet and orchestra but these did not detract from the overall effect of the works.³⁰⁷ The soloists David Stone, Irene Morgan and Frances de Goldi in the *Concerto Grosso* were deemed to be of a very high quality and the orchestra generally was outstanding in the diverse works presented. Whilst the reviewers focussed primarily on the players' performance, Ritchie's interpretation of the differing compositions, his musicality, and his conductorship, were also commended.

The *Liederkränzchen* recital was likewise deemed to be a success by its reviewers M.T.D. and B.B. Ritchie's directing was described as resourceful and the orchestral players' obvious enjoyment of Ritchie's arrangement of the Finale to Act II of *Il Matrimonio Segreto* by Domenico Cimarosa was positively remarked on. This was the final concert in which John Ritchie String Orchestra and University Quartet second violinist, Irene Morgan, performed before Morgan travelled to England to further her violin and piano studies. In honour of her service and to wish her well on her journey, the orchestra had arranged a special farewell for her, an event which attracted the local media and which was reported on in the newspaper. The musicians and conductor assembled in the Christchurch airport lounge, instruments and baton in hand, and began playing as Morgan appeared and said her goodbyes. It was a send-off to remember for her and she wrote a letter of thanks soon after her arrival in London: 'Dear John & Strings, What a wonderful farewell you gave me the other night! Honestly it was more

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

than Princess Margaret could have hoped for [...]. I must say though it made landing at London Airport seem rather dull'. The following year the *Press* announced: 'A Christchurch musician, who left New Zealand for England last year, joined the celebrated Halle Orchestra last June and was recently appointed to play among the first violins'.

Griffiths was determined to pursue the establishment of a professional orchestra in Christchurch. To this end, he spoke forthrightly and at length at a Christchurch Civic Council meeting on 25 June 1960 to promote the notion of a string orchestra of around fourteen players. Since raising the subject previously, there had been suggestions that a semi-professional symphony orchestra could suit the needs of the city – and its purse. Griffiths was adamant that this proposal was flawed and should not be considered because 'it condemned every musical activity to mediocrity for years to come'. The John Ritchie String Orchestra was cited as a welcome exception since the recent disestablishment of the 3YA orchestra in late 1959; however Griffiths believed that the city must act now to provide an orchestra of paid members. It could not be expected that central government would fund one, nor was it realistic to establish a symphony orchestra although this could certainly evolve.³⁰⁸

During the meeting Clifton Cook raised concerns about the limited repertoire of such an orchestra and whether they could fully support the local choral groups. Griffiths was quick to reply that there were many such works which could successfully accompany the choirs and that the orchestra could also be supplemented with woodwind instruments or obbligato when necessary. It might have been assumed that Ritchie would have fully supported Griffiths's proposal; in fact he was quoted as saying that he advocated funding a semi-professional group of strings, brass and woodwind immediately which could then be reduced into a professional orchestra in a few years. Griffiths rejected his suggestion, countering it with 'It would merely be a picture of what has happened in the past. There would have to be a showdown when the contraction took place'.

³⁰⁸ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1959-1960. 'Paid String Orchestra Advocated for City', *Press*, 25 June 1960.

Christchurch City Councillor G. A. G. Connal confirmed that six local county bodies supported in principle the notion of a professional orchestra and could provide some funding for this to the total of fifteen hundred pounds. This amount together with the choral societies combined contribution of one thousand pounds would leave a deficit of two thousand pounds. Griffiths's estimate of the total annual cost was four thousand five hundred pounds and it was hoped that the shortfall would come from private commercial enterprise. This was based on a three hundred pound annuity per player to start with; an amount Griffiths considered one hundred pounds less than ideal but realistic to start with. The subject was then to be discussed at the council's July meeting at which time a newly formed sub-committee would present a draft plan on the formation of such an orchestra.

The Riccarton Borough Council hosted a meeting to further discuss the financial support which could be provided for the proposed orchestra. The meeting was attended by local body representatives from the Waimairi, Paparua, Heathcote and Riccarton Counties as well as the Lyttelton Borough Council. Absent from the meeting were representatives from Halswell County. Firm support was confirmed by Waimairi, Riccarton and Lyttelton with likely support from the remaining three bodies in attendance. Ritchie's contribution to the evening's proceedings was to affirm the need for an orchestra in Christchurch and that this would likely only be successful with the manner of funding proposed: 'Paternal funding of the arts was today becoming the accepted thing'.

Items pertaining to non-financial issues were also discussed at the meeting. It was expected that the positions for the orchestra would likely be filled by the John Ritchie String Orchestra members since they were of the highest standard available; however the roles would be publicly advertised. It was confirmed that Ritchie would be the orchestra's conductor. The question of naming the orchestra was raised with various options put forward: The Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, the Canterbury Symphony Orchestra and the Christchurch Metropolitan Symphony although no decision was made at this time.

In December 1960 the Christchurch Civic Music Council announced the inception of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation Incorporated. With representatives from the various organisations which had been approached to assist with the funding of a local orchestra, this appeared to be a further step in securing Christchurch its own orchestra. The Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation would support the John Ritchie String Orchestra – as it stood or augmented – under Ritchie’s conductorship as a Christchurch civic orchestra, as well as providing some funding to players in other groups in order to meet the required standard of performance within the orchestra. All requests for the orchestra’s services were to be made through the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation which would also contract the orchestra for a number of rehearsals and recitals, and performances with the contributing choirs. A liaison sub-committee of five including Ritchie would manage any approach made, with any augmentation requirements solely in Ritchie’s hands. Councillor Connal who convened the meeting advised that they were hopeful that the National Cultural Fund would provide financial support but that this was yet to be determined.

A short time after this meeting on 23 December, the amount of one thousand five hundred pounds was approved by the Honourable F. L. A. Gotz, Minister of Internal Affairs, to assist with the establishment of a Christchurch civic orchestra by the Christchurch Civic Music Council. This amount compared reasonably favourably with other similar applications made to the newly formed Arts Advisory Council; the New Zealand Ballet Trust was granted two thousand five hundred pounds and the Wellington Operatic Society five hundred and fifty pounds for their respective annual productions.

It was made clear by the minister that no assumption should be made that the same or any grant would be made in subsequent years and that there was an expectation from the council that the funds would be used primarily for the core cultural and artistic function of the organisation. Mr Connal for the Civic Music Council confirmed that the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation previously decided on would now be formed with the monies used to place the John Ritchie String Orchestra players on a professional footing without delay. The grant

brought the total funds available to four thousand pounds, still just over one thousand pounds short of the forecast annual running costs.

While these machinations were playing out in the second half of 1960, the John Ritchie String Orchestra continued to perform regularly to enthusiastic audiences and generally very good reviews. On 30 June, the eleven players performed Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D major* and Air from Orchestral Suite in D together with Walter Leigh's Concertino for Harpsichord and String Orchestra for a lunch-time concert in the University Hall. Ritchie conducted while fellow lecturer Michael Toovey performed on harpsichord. Approximately two weeks later on 15 July the players returned to the site of their inaugural recital, the Durham Street Art Gallery, to present a mid-day Promenade Concert at 12.15 p.m. followed by a repeat performance at 1.10 p.m.

Similar to the orchestra's first outing there, paintings and prints provided by the Canterbury Society of Arts were on view for those attending; this time however there was less seating provided as it was expected that the audience would wander between the gallery's two rooms between musical items, thus enhancing the marriage of the two arts. Joining the John Ritchie String Orchestra were four National Orchestra members: Ritchie's close friend Alex Lindsay along with Ritchie Hanna, Glynne Adams and Farquhar Wilkinson who performed *Elegy for Viola, String Quartet and String Orchestra* by Herbert Howells.

The John Ritchie String Orchestra was a larger group than its previous outings with nine violinists, three viola players, three cellists and two basses, compared with the usual five, two, three and one respectively. In keeping with the often used formula, the works were placed chronologically, the concert opening with Bach's Concerto No.2 in E for Violin and String Orchestra. This was followed by Howells' *Elegy* and *Kleine Serenade* by Lars Larsson to close. JSRO's Teresa Beaven and Elizabeth Cook were the soloists for the Bach and Howells respectively. The Bach was also studio recorded and aired on 3YC later in the year on the 14 September along with *Serenade for String Orchestra* by Elgar.

The orchestra was now catering to the needs of the local choirs' productions as well as holding recitals in its own right. It provided the means by which New Zealand musicians could perform at a high standard in Christchurch, highlighted by the inclusion of soloists 'The Lander Duo' (Judith McDonald and Shirley Power) from Wellington at the John Ritchie String Orchestra's concert on 5 August 1960 in the Canterbury University Hall. The concert was advertised in local papers with the stated admission details: 'Invitation Subscriptions at BEGGS 5/- subscription'. Ticket prices for recitals in Christchurch at this time varied depending on associated costs such as invitation guests and hiring of venues. Generally the department's lunch-time recitals were free while attendees at the Promenade Concert for example paid 2s. 6d. for a ticket. The 'large and enthusiastic audience' (C.H.D.) at this particular recital indicated that the John Ritchie String Orchestra with noted guest performers could command a higher than usual entry fee without issue. The recital opened with Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor with Elizabeth Cook and David Stone. Full use was made of the piano duo guests with the inclusion of Bach's Concerto for two Keyboards in C Major which followed an arrangement by Ritchie of Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali*.

The orchestra's ability to expand its repertoire in support of New Zealand composers was displayed with the inclusion of two major New Zealand works for the second half of the concert: Lilburn's *Landfall in Unknown Seas* and *Concerto for Two Pianos and Strings* by Hugo Anson (1894-1958). Largely forgotten, New Zealand-born Anson had spent most of his life in England, beginning his studies at Cambridge in 1912 before embarking on a music teaching career, firstly at Alleyn's School, Dulwich, and then at the Royal College of Music. The programme indicated the order of these two works as above; however the review suggests that the Lilburn work was performed last. Whether this was a programme printing mistake or a change by the conductor on the evening is unknown.

'Fine Musical Fare' lauded reviewer C.H.D. while M.H.T. was less ebullient in his summing up: 'Ritchie String Orchestra Gives Interesting Concert'. Both reviewers commended the orchestra and soloists' excellent playing throughout

irrespective of the music, while commenting variously on the programme both as a whole and on the individual works. C.H.D's opening paragraphs opined that the Music Department's concert series had 'made the University the home and centre of a cultural activity of which the city might be well proud'. The reviewer described the Hugo Anson work as 'one of the surprises which Mr Ritchie seems adept at giving us' without quite saying why but believing the players themselves enjoyed its sudden shifts from apparent clarity to the unfamiliar. His appraisal of Lilburn's setting of *Landfall* was brief although he acknowledged it to be a 'most impressive end' to the concert, deeming it 'well designed to match the poem' with particular emphasis on the third interlude.

Conversely, M.H.T. was scathing in his review of the Anson work and much more enthusiastic than C.H.D in his praise for Lilburn's work. He commented that as recent past registrar of the Royal College of Music, one might have expected that Anson would 'presuppose some flair for organisation, but such a quality was by no means evident during this quite hideous piece of music!'. Rather than finding its apparent complexity amusing, he considered it to be so overcrowded with notes as to be decadent in style. Comparing the following and final work of the evening and the highlight of the evening, M.H.T. wrote: '*Landfall in Unknown Seas* [...] [exhibited] clean music instead of muddled, healthy music instead of diseased'. Both reviewers commented favourably on Ritchie's string arrangements of the Frescobaldi organ solos, C.H.D describing the music as 'quite breath-taking in its beauty' while M.H.T. acknowledged that although a previous performance had not impressed, the resonance of the University Hall allowed the pieces to come alive and 'made a considerable contribution to the character of the programme as a whole'.

In July 1960 the Alex Lindsay Orchestra completed and released a recording of wholly New Zealand music which was advertised on the back of the John Ritchie String Orchestra's 5 August programme.

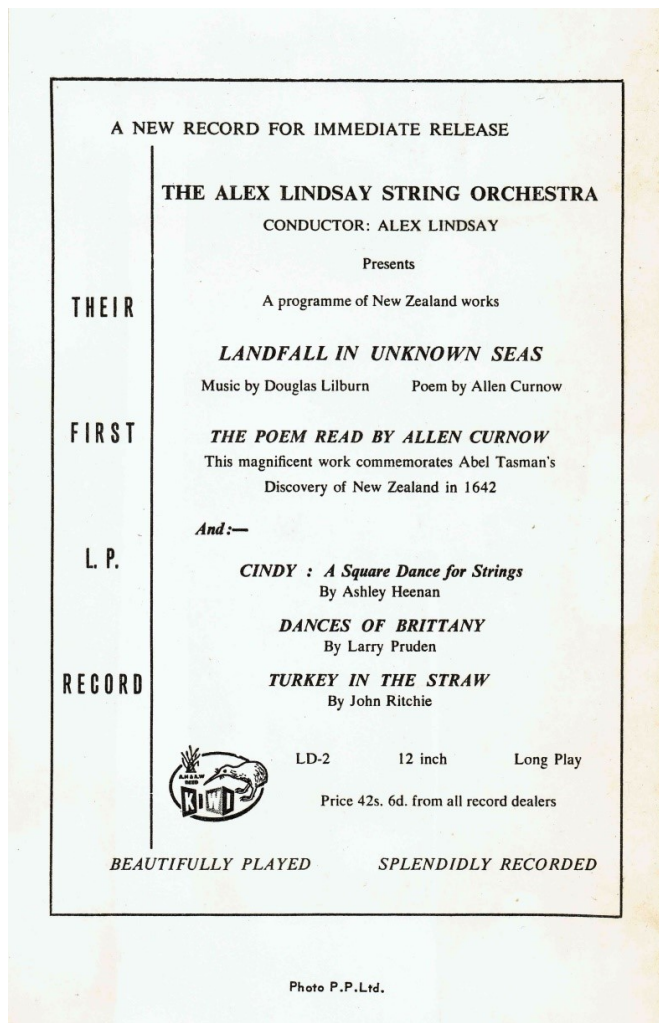


Figure 56: Back of John Ritchie String Orchestra 5 August 1960 programme. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Showcasing Lilburn's *Landfall in Unknown Seas* on one side of the long playing record (LP) published by Kiwi Records, the LP included *Cindy* (1951) by Ashley Heenan, Larry Pruden's *Dances of Brittany* (1956) and Ritchie's arrangement of *Turkey in the Straw* on the other. 'Discobolus' for *The New Zealand Listener* described the record as a 'joy full stop no reservations'. Without doubt the major work was the highly praised Lilburn; the second 'light' side no less appreciated and enjoyed. The works of the three 'young men' all of whom had spent some time outside of New Zealand were alike in their use of traditional tunes from Europe (Pruden) and America (Heenan and Ritchie) which underpinned their respective compositions. Ritchie's piece was noted for its irreverent Elgar *Introduction and Allegro for Strings* quotation, the few bars used highlighting the humorous side of his personality. Music from New Zealand was subsequently

favourably reviewed in the June 1961 issue of *The Gramophone* for both performance and works, albeit from a superior stance in which it was implied that sole credit for the composers' output was due to their study offshore: '[E]ach one of these [New Zealand composers] was trained in London and is now working at home. The happy result is that it is possible to make for the first time a record consisting entirely of serious music by New Zealand composers, and one which into the bargain maintains the highest standards throughout'.

Additionally the John Ritchie String Orchestra featured on an educational extended play record (EP) for the New Zealand Broadcasting Service, with recordings of accompaniments to songs which featured in the broadcast to schools book. The Educational Broadcast to Schools programme had begun in the late 1920s by the National Broadcasting Service. The organising and production of the broadcasts was originally done at a local level by the YA stations in conjunction with the Training Colleges at the four main centres. Music was one of several subjects originally included in the programme which covered art, exploration, social life, literature and science. An accompanying published book detailed each lesson broadcast for the year which teachers used in conjunction with the broadcast lesson.



Figure 57: Cover of educational recording by the John Ritchie String Orchestra. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

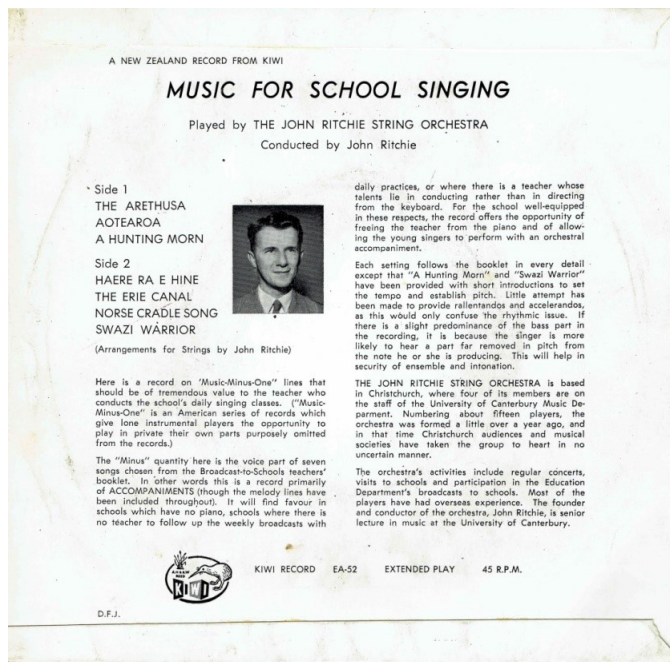


Figure 58: Back of educational recording by the John Ritchie String Orchestra. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The object of the programme was to ensure all children would be taught aspects of knowledge and culture which mainstream education and home-life might not provide. The music lessons covered composers, instruments, basic notation and terms, and songs. Children were taught music appreciation and experienced group singing without necessarily having a trained music teacher at the school. It was expected that work would be done in the classroom between broadcasts so that progress could be made.

Professor James Shelley, Chair of Education at Canterbury University College (1920-1936) and first Director of the National Broadcasting Service (1936-1949), was the Director of the Christchurch programme while the music lessons were designed by Ernest Jenner. The period leading up to the Second World War saw a merging of the centres in the production of the lessons with the Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington service amalgamating in 1941. Soon after, the programme was overseen at a national level by the Broadcasting Service and the Department of Education. At some point, at least by 1954, a separate music book was published which contained only songs and both a teacher and pupils version

printed.³⁰⁹ The 1954 volume was produced by John Longmire and contained twenty-one English folk and traditional songs with piano accompaniment as well as a small number of unaccompanied songs and rounds intended for sight singing.

While some of the songs did not refer to a particular composer, arrangements by Longmire, Griffiths and Percy Turnbull were noted. In fact Ritchie was of the age at school when the music broadcasts were used but he did not recall the programme being used during his early or later school years. He did however think it possible that Mr Goldman from his days at The Terrace in Wellington may have been aware of the programme.

Originally, musical accompaniments for the music were provided by the players from the regional YA studio orchestras although by 1945 the Christchurch orchestra had disbanded.³¹⁰ As one of only a few orchestras of a high standard outside of the National Orchestra, the John Ritchie String Orchestra had gained a reputation for excellent playing and was increasingly being called upon for its services such as this particular contract. The playing was described as neat with lively rhythm and was sympathetic to the purpose of the accompaniments; the music was performed without any tempo changes throughout to ensure its suitability for the unskilled, young singers for whom it was intended.

The orchestra performed once more with the Harmonic Society during 1960 for the Society's second subscription concert which was held in the Civic Theatre on 24 September. The choir and orchestra performed Bach's *Magnificat in D*, and Vaughan Williams's *Benedicte* with soprano Heather Taylor while the unaccompanied *Where Does the Music Go* by William Walton was also included. The conducting for such concerts was most commonly done by the choir's director; however other opportunities arose for Ritchie to perform outside of his established role as director of the John Ritchie String Orchestra. In early

³⁰⁹ Ritchie papers, photocopy of music only, Broadcast to Schools book.

³¹⁰ 'Contents of the Programmes: Part 7: Tuning Up - The story of the YC stations, Concert Programme and the Symphony Orchestra, *Radio New Zealand*, 1'15", (2019) <<https://www.rnz.co.nz/collections/resounding-radio/contents>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

September the New Zealand Ballet, which had recently established as a professional company, performed a week-long season at the Theatre Royal in Christchurch. Musical accompaniment was provided by 'The Orchestra' and the Christchurch Harmonic Society Chorus. The conductor for the orchestra of thirty-three personnel which included many of the John Ritchie String Orchestra players was named as Alex Lindsay but the task was in fact shared between Lindsay and Ritchie as indicated by notes in Ritchie's copy of the programme: '& J.A.R.' noted in blue pen in the centre page next to 'conducted by Alex Lindsay' is clearly Ritchie's handwriting. A written reminder on the following page under the title 'Prince Igor: Polvtisian Dances' states: 'Changes of tempo – watch in relation to chorus' confirm Ritchie's involvement.³¹¹

A traditional programme of Bach, Schubert, Brahms, Chopin, Handel and Purcell by the Eroica Club with the John Ritchie String Orchestra in mid-October followed a performance by the orchestra with Xavier College in a presentation of Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore* late September. The orchestra received creditable reviews for their playing and especially noted was their skill as support to the choristers and soloists, and their ability to keep rhythmic momentum. As was often the case, mention was made of Ritchie's conducting expertise in directing the orchestra in an accompanying role.

The penultimate concert for the year was the Centennial Concert held on Saturday, 20 November under the auspices of the Royal Christchurch Musical Society Incorporated. Whilst the preparation for the augmented John Ritchie String Orchestra was undertaken by Ritchie, Robert Field-Dodgson as the society's director and, its deputy, Victor C. Ellena, shared the conducting for all but one of the items. The exception was Vernon Griffiths's *Thanksgiving Ode* for chorus and orchestra which the composer also conducted. The major work was Vaughan Williams's Cantata *Dona Nobis Pacem* which occupied the entire second half of the programme while the audience was entertained with Handel, Parry, a smaller

³¹¹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1959-1960.

Vaughan Williams work, *Valiant for Truth*, and the Griffiths work during the first part of the concert.

As Ritchie's primary early influence in music was Griffiths, Griffiths's compositions and the public's perceptions of them at the time are important to document. *Thanksgiving Ode* was a setting of words by the Reverend Father Bernard O'Brien S.J. (1907-1982) especially for the Society's centennial.³¹² Of particular note is the sentiment expressed by both reviewers (C.F.B. and M.T.D.) of the performance that Griffiths's music was exceptionally well crafted and that the vocal music with its 'flowing tunes' reflected the meaning and expression inherent in the words by the use of harmony and modulations, following the changing character of the verse throughout. Well-written string writing and attentive choristers gave the performance its praiseworthy reception to the audience and critics alike.

The final month of the year proved to be a busy one with two accompanying recitals and the John Ritchie String Orchestra's final solo performance which took place on the 1 December at the Durham Street Art Gallery. Although lectures had finished for the university year, Ritchie's appetite for an increasingly diverse musical world was shown by his continued involvement in activities outside of his teaching role. The university had been the springboard for the orchestra's inception and provided the basis as a concert venue and performances for the wider community. As a consequence, Ritchie's musical life was expanding and increasingly busy. Records of a rehearsal and performance schedule for November and December provide a window to this aspect of the life of music which Ritchie inhabited.³¹³

³¹² SOUNZ record that Griffiths's *An Ode to Thanksgiving* was composed in 1962: 'An Ode of Thanksgiving for SATB, Choir and String Orchestra', *SOUNZ: Centre for New Zealand Music Toi te Arapūoru* <<https://www.sounz.org.nz/works/14872>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

³¹³ Ritchie papers, Ritchie, re-written for clarity from Scrapbook 1959-1960. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Table 1: The John Ritchie String Orchestra rehearsal and performance schedule for November 1960 as noted by Ritchie.

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------|--|---|---|--|
| 1 | Tuesday | Rehearse | } | [| Wagner: Siegfried Idyll, |
| 4 | Friday | Rehearse | | | Holst, Brook, Green, |
| 8 | Tuesday | Rehearse | | | Chaconne and Childhood. |
| 15 | Tuesday | [10.00 a.m. Rehearse 12.45 p.m. RECORD, N.Z.B.S. Song Accompaniments | | | |
| 15 | Tuesday | Rehearse | | | |
| 18 | Friday | Rehearse N.Z.B.S. | | | |
| 22 | Tuesday | (Durham St. Methodist) | } | [| Zadock the Priest |
| 24 | Thursday | (Civic) Rehearse | | | Griffiths Cantata, |
| 26 | Saturday | (Civic) Concert | | | Blest pair of Sirens |
| 29 | Tuesday | Rehearse Concert programme | | | Dona Nobis Pacem |
| 30 | Wednesday | BROADCAST, N.Z.B.S. : | | [| Chaconne, Brook Green Suite, Walton Pieces |

Table 2: The John Ritchie String Orchestra rehearsal and performance schedule for December 1960 as noted by Ritchie.

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------|-------------------------|---|---|----------|
| 1 | Thursday | CONCERT | [| Chaconne: Haydn Cello Concerto Wagner: Siegfried Idyll Rowley: The Childhood Walton: Two Pieces Holst: Brook Green Suite | |
| 5 | Monday | Rehearse | | Messiah | |
| 7 | Wednesday | CONCERT | | Messiah | |
| 10 | Saturday | CONCERT | | Messiah | |
| 13 | Tuesday | (Y.M.C.A.) Rehearse | | Messiah | Harmonic |
| 14 | Wednesday | (Civic) Rehearse | | | |
| 15 | Thursday | (Civic) CONCERT (Short) | | | |
| 17 | Saturday | (Civic) CONCERT (Full) | | | |

A programme of two discrete halves was delivered on 1 December: Handel, Pachelbel and Haydn was followed by Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*; *The Boyhood of Christ*, a new work by Alec Rowley; two Walton songs from the *Henry V* film music; and *Brook Green Suite* by Holst. The Rowley and Vaughan Williams's works were subsequently played on Wellington station 2YC together with The Canterbury University Madrigal Group's rendition of *The Crib* by Martin Shaw on 21 December. M.T.D. was fulsome in his praise for Ritchie's musicianship as 'never failing to appreciate the disparate mood and character of each work' while retaining command of the orchestra throughout.

The orchestra then accompanied Handel's *Messiah* for the joint South Brighton Choral Society and the Rangiora Musical Society performances at their respective towns on 7 and 10 December and again with the Christchurch Harmonic Society Incorporated at the Civic Theatre on the evenings of 15 and 17 December, the first of which was broadcast live on 3YC. Once more the orchestra's performances received praise for the support of the choir and the players' careful attention to the conductor's directions. Optimism for the orchestra's future was high. The John Ritchie String Orchestra was now a recognised solo and accompanying group in Canterbury and the promise of funds from the Arts Council was expected to facilitate the establishment of a civic orchestra in Christchurch using the string orchestra as its basis.

The orchestra had not yet, however, become well-known nationwide. From a variety of musical fare over the festive season, music reviewer Graham Paton selected two programmes to comment on in the *New Zealand Listener* dated 13 January 1961, one of which was the Madrigal Singers with the John Ritchie String Orchestra broadcast concert of late December. Both groups were highly commended for their excellent performances; the singers under William Hawkey's direction were an 'integrated vocal ensemble...full of musical spirit' and 'very good indeed'. The John Ritchie String Orchestra, Paton noted, were 'less predictable' having not been heard previously:

It is another accomplished little group. The first desk players sang sweetly and altogether this orchestra suggests the existence in Christchurch of a string school at a better technical level than that in a much larger city such as Auckland [...]. It is to be hoped that we may sample more work by the John Ritchie Strings.

Paton was not the only one to have noticed the John Ritchie String Orchestra's playing. In February they lost two of their players to the National Orchestra training scheme.³¹⁴ Along with seven other young musicians from around the country, Angela Lindsay and Sheila Riches were selected to rehearse and perform with the National Orchestra in Wellington under the care of music organiser Ashley Heenan for one year. The scheme was expected to benefit both players and orchestra; players would be provided with the opportunity of advancing their skills with twenty-five hours per week scheduled playing as well as performing with professional players, while the orchestra would have a supply of skilled players in the event of vacancies.

On 23 February 1961 an auspicious meeting chaired by Mr G.A.G. Connal was held in the City Council Chambers where the establishment of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation was formally proposed:

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON THURSDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1961, AT 8 P.M., CALLED BY THE CHRISTCHURCH CIVIC MUSIC COUNCIL FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING AN ORGANISATION TO BE NAMED THE CHRISTCHURCH CIVIC ORCHESTRA FOUNDATION.³¹⁵

An interim committee comprising of G.A.G. Connal, A.W. Mann, C. Foster Browne and F.F. de Berry was appointed. Their task was to ensure that the correct procedures were followed in order to secure approval of the Christchurch Civic

³¹⁴ Officially called the NZBC Schola Musicum.

³¹⁵ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1961-December 1961.

Orchestra Foundation by the Registrar of Incorporated Societies, organise a meeting to adopt the rules, and to elect officers. It would only be after this had taken place that the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation would be deemed to have been properly launched. It was expected that it would be similar in organisation to the Alex Lindsay Foundation in Wellington.

Available funds of three thousand pounds would be supplemented by orchestral earnings such as a broadcasting contract and performances and an estimate of twelve pounds per hour for rehearsals for an orchestra of around seventeen members was provided by Ritchie. In addition, the support of the best orchestra in Christchurch, the John Ritchie String Orchestra, by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation was restated: 'The scheme should be highly successful and it will be enhanced by the enthusiasm [...] from members of the John Ritchie orchestra'. Concerns around less able musical groups who would not benefit from the proposed scheme were addressed: 'It was the foundation's intention to foster all orchestras in the city. That was imperative if an orchestra was to maintain a high standard'.

As most of the rules such as membership, subscription, and administration had been discussed and agreed on, it was to be expected that the formal process would be done in a timely manner. While this was another step forward, this process would only ensure the establishment of the foundation and not of a city orchestra which was ultimately its aim. The rules stipulated that the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation would contract with 'any suitable orchestra' for services required. In summary, it would serve as a body to which any party would go to for musical support for performances; a composer who wanted a new work performed, a choral society who needed accompaniment for their recitals, or a ballet company on tour requiring local musicians.

The orchestra's first outing of 1961 was as part of the schools' concert series on 10 March. Approximately sixteen hundred children from Aranui, Linwood and Cashmere High Schools, St Marys' College, and Christchurch South Intermediate were provided with the opportunity to hear the works of Handel (*Queen of Sheba*),

Gabriel-Marie (*La Cinquaintaine*), Woodhouse (*Fairy Fingers*), Britten (*Simple Symphony*), Janefelt (*Berceuse*) and Bohm (*Moto Perpetuo*) as well as a demonstration of the instruments provided by various players. The outing was followed by an accompanying role as the augmented orchestra on 25 March for the Royal Christchurch Musical Society's production of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. Anita Ritchie too, as soprano soloist, was performing with her rendition of *In Love My Saviour now is Dying* described as 'touchingly beautiful'.

A critique of a studio broadcast by the John Ritchie String Orchestra playing Handel's Opus 6, No.7 Concerto Grosso and *A Simple Symphony* by Britten on 3YC three days later provided a good springboard for their forthcoming first recital of the year. With sound technique and excellent communication amongst the players, 'the sounds each of the performers drew from the strings were alive and intense, prismatic in colouring and skilfully employed in strong fortissimo and delicate pianissimo. In these two works, precision and rhythmic vitality were outstanding'.³¹⁶

The following month the John Ritchie String Orchestra performed their first concert under the auspices of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation. Advertised thus: 'Sponsored by The Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation (Inc.)', the seventeen member orchestra with visiting English guest oboist Elizabeth Ogden and soprano Heather Taylor performed for the first time in the Caledonian Hall, Kilmore Street on 6 April 1961. A special note was printed on the back of the programme in which the foundation's involvement 'in sponsoring this concert requests your personal support for the John Ritchie String Orchestra by attending its concerts and by making its work and the work of the Foundation known to others'.

The altered status of the orchestra generated a higher than usual degree of anticipation both amongst the players and the public. After two years as amateurs, the orchestra could now look forward with optimism to a more secure footing.

³¹⁶ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1961-December 1961, Monitor, 'Sensitive Playing by Orchestra', On the Air, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

Preparation which had always been done meticulously by Ritchie and the players was attended to with a heightened sense of attention to detail. It had been a long and difficult road up until this point and Ritchie was acutely aware that there had been some dissension over the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's decision to employ the John Ritchie String Orchestra in favour of using a wider range of players in the city; hence the orchestra's members felt their responsibility keenly.

The programme had been well-rehearsed with the earlier schools and studio performances allowing the orchestra a run-through of most of the works. Opening with the Concerto Grosso, the *Concerto for Oboe and Strings on themes of Arcangelo Corelli* by Barbirolli and Grieg's *Holberg Suite* completed the first half of the programme. A lighter second half of Britten, Gabriel-Marie, Farnfelt and Bohm interspersed with Heather Taylor singing three songs by Bishop finished off the evening. The reviewers C.F.B. and M.T.D. provided a detailed appraisal of the evening's performances, noting the air of expectancy surrounding the sponsored event. Proclaimed an 'excellent concert', the orchestra's 'spirit of enthusiasm' was, as always, noticeable throughout. The orchestra's strong leaders in David Stone (violin) and Elizabeth Cook (cello) supported by some younger, able players provided Ritchie with a good foundation to perform the array of music which was deemed to be expertly selected. On the whole the orchestra's playing impressed and particular mention was made of its tonal colour, expression and interpretation. Ritchie's direction was impeccable, maintaining 'excellent control throughout the concert', showing the 'excellence of training of his players and his unfaltering artistry of interpretation'.

A summary outlining the John Ritchie String Orchestra's formation together with an appeal for continued support was written by Ritchie and published in *Chamber Music News* (issued by The New Zealand Federation of Chamber Music Societies Incorporated) in April 1961.³¹⁷ Entitled 'Community Support for Orchestra',

³¹⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie Scrapbook 1961, John Ritchie, 'Community Support for Orchestra', *Chamber Music News*, April 1961, pp. 9-10.

Ritchie described the occasion in 1958 when a string accompaniment was needed for a choral concert. In quick time at Ritchie's direction, the players from the University's resident String Trio together with others known in local musical circles formed what was to become the basis of the hastily named orchestra. Although the then-recent disbanding of the broadcasting orchestra had created a crisis amongst the choral societies, it was a catalyst in establishing the John Ritchie String Orchestra which was then able to fill the void which had been created. It was also timely that a sufficient number of good players were available. The formation of the National Orchestra in 1947 had stripped the best performers from cities and towns around the country but there had been enough time in the intervening years for the rebuilding of a musical performance base.

Ritchie expressed the importance of community support for its local orchestra. He made comparisons to other services suggesting that an orchestra should expect the same support that 'plumbers, taxi drivers, printers and pie cart proprietors' receive and rely on from the public for their survival. He noted that the John Ritchie String Orchestra as a small part time group had paid its way for the two years of its existence but this was only possible with very careful administration (perhaps Ritchie's lessons from his father had been well learnt), including judicious programming in order to keep rehearsal times to a minimum. He used a formula to determine how many times one piece could be reused: a four-minute piece, for example, took four minutes of rehearsal time for each minute's duration. Such a work might be repeated once at most whereas a ten-minute piece could be included in three different programmes: radio, a university lunchtime concert, and an evening public concert, as well as for the concerts in schools series. It would be a greater challenge for a full civic orchestra to operate in a similarly financially viable way but a start had now been made.

On 22 April 1961 the Harmonic Society performed Bach's B Minor Mass at the Civic Theatre ably supported by the John Ritchie String Orchestra (augmented). The orchestra's playing was observed as skilful with good tone and rhythm. Personnel changes had taken place since the orchestra's previous outing, the most significant being that John Dodds had replaced leader David Stone. In the

meantime a string quartet had been formed from some of the orchestra's young players with the aim of competing in the national Junior String Quartet Contest in which all entrants had to be twenty-five years of age or under. Coached by Ritchie, it was led by Philippa Harding on cello, Marjory Dumbleton on viola with violinists Robin Perks and Susan Jones, all of whom were current university students.

Cameo – Robin Perks

Robin Perks, son of old school friend and Christchurch Technical College's music specialist Robert Perks (1919-1985), at seventeen years of age, was the youngest of the players.³¹⁸ He first came into contact with Ritchie when still a pre-schooler as Ritchie and his father had remained in close contact since their early years at King Edward Technical College. He recalled that the Ritchie family would visit their home in Sumner on occasion and Anita Ritchie, who he remembered as a very good soloist, and his mother would sing together while Perks senior would accompany them on the piano. Ritchie too would 'have a go'.

Perks took his first violin lessons at the Music Technical College in Barbadoes Street when he was around seven or eight years old. Perks recalled meeting the leader of the college's orchestra at that time, twenty year old John Dodds, whom he admired enormously and considered a very fine player. Perks was taught by Romola Griffiths for approximately three years before he began lessons with Czechoslovakian Robert Mraz. Mraz had been a cellist with the Prague Symphony Orchestra but had emigrated with his wife due to the effects of the war years and was working in a drycleaners in Christchurch. A chance meeting on a bus where Robert Perks struck up a conversation with the musician saw the young Perks change teachers when he was twelve years old. His early training was predominantly technical, obviously necessary but at times tedious, and it was only after he began his lessons with Mraz that Perks began to love playing. Mraz inspired Perks in a musical sense; scales, the bane of many a child's musical

³¹⁸ Robin Perks, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Wellington: 16 August 2010). Recording and transcript held by the author.

training, became in a sense secondary to pieces, and teacher and pupil spent much of their time playing duets together.

Perks was the leader of the Linwood High School (now Linwood College) orchestra but apart from becoming close friends with fellow student and Sumner resident Rupert Glover, son of renowned poet Denis Glover, his high school years were rather unmemorable; the school had no tradition in music. Glover too learnt the violin and the two boys would be driven into the city by Perks senior together for lessons and orchestra practice at the Christchurch School of Music. The school was founded by Robert Perks in 1955 to provide music education for school-aged children and from the age of twelve Robin Perks was also the leader of its main orchestra.

Perks was encouraged by his parents to gain a tertiary qualification and so enrolled in a Bachelor of Music at the University of Canterbury. Some classes took place in a house in Cashel Street which was then the seat of the music department, while other lectures were held in the original stone building, now the Arts Centre of Christchurch. He took violin lessons variously with Elizabeth (Beth) Rogers, Thomas Rogers and David Stone. By this time he had already been playing in the John Ritchie String Orchestra for a year, having been offered a position by Ritchie in the second violins when he was still at school aged sixteen. His father played double bass in the orchestra and was also accomplished in several other instruments, a product of his time with Griffiths at King Edward Technical College; however unlike his son, he did not pursue his performance options. He was full time lecturer at the Teachers College and Robin believed that his father's passion was education; that it was his mission to give all children the opportunity of learning music and that cost should not be an impediment.

Perks spent four invaluable years with the John Ritchie String Orchestra. Aside from a little tension when things were not going well at rehearsals generally, Ritchie was amenable and affable, and very supportive of all members but particularly of the young players. He was clear and concise in his directing and inspiring as a conductor. To Perks, this was due to a profound knowledge of

serious music. It was apparent in Ritchie's approach, that in order to achieve excellence and professionalism in orchestral playing, opportunities for gifted performers must be available at an early age. As the youngest player in the orchestra Perks was able to take advantage of this, performing with the more experienced players in a raft of memorable occasions: playing Beethoven's third piano concerto with Julius Katchen in the Great Hall, recording in the 3YA studios in Gloucester Street, performing Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the university choir, and travelling and playing at the many schools concerts. Of the latter, Perks particularly remembered Ritchie's gift for oration at such events and his ability to enthuse the children. This was further enhanced by Ritchie's choice of music they performed and especially the inclusion of Ritchie's *Turkey in the Straw*. Ritchie was a fine composer and, as with all of his works Perks recalled playing, had a special ability to write for the performer and the audience.

Perks was also a founding member of the National Youth Orchestra which John Hopkins had established in Wellington in 1959. Rehearsals were held in the May and August school holidays when Perks would travel to Wellington and stay with an aunt for the duration. Perks recalled that Ritchie attended a few of these as a sectional and sometimes orchestral conductor. In 1964 Perks was offered and took a place in the New Zealand orchestral trainee scheme, following the path of previous John Ritchie String Orchestra members, Angela Lindsay and Sheila Riches. In doing so, he left university without completing his degree at the end of his third of four years required study. Coinciding with his place in the training scheme, he was appointed concertmaster of the National Youth Orchestra, a position he held for three years.

After a few years in Wellington, Perks had a successful career playing in orchestras in Europe for seven years before returning to Christchurch, New Zealand. He joined the Christchurch Civic Orchestra then returned to Wellington and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. He became enamoured with klezmer music while overseas and has performed it in Wellington for a number of years including as a member of the four-piece ensemble The Kugels.

Orchestral Development and the John Ritchie String Orchestra 1961-1965

Following regional competitions for the 1961 national Junior String Quartet contest, the young John Ritchie String Orchestra members' quartet competed in the contest on 11 May 1961 in Wellington along with groups from Wellington and Auckland; there were no entries from Dunedin. Included in the Wellington quartet were the two young women, Angela Lindsay and Sheila Riches who had left Christchurch (and the John Ritchie String Orchestra) earlier in the year after being selected to train with the National Orchestra. It was in fact this group which was awarded first prize by adjudicator Ernest Empson while the Christchurch ensemble of Philippa Harding, Marjory Dumbleton, Robin Perks and Susan Jones was placed second. Entrants were required to prepare a test piece from which they were asked to play one or more movements as well as a selection of their own. Unlike the Auckland and Wellington groups who opted for traditional fare – Beethoven's B flat major and C Minor Quartets respectively – the Christchurch players performed Alfred Hill's Quartet No. 11 in D minor. Whilst Hill was not by any means avant-garde, the choice of a contemporary piece for such an event may have been an indication of Ritchie's willingness, notwithstanding that Hill had died the previous year, to advance the music of the living and working composer.

Also in early May, the recently selected National Youth Orchestra for 1961, the third year since its inception, assembled in Wellington with conductor John Hopkins to rehearse for two concerts in September. Preparation included sectional practices by three invited tutors for woodwind, brass and strings: W. H. Walden Mills (Education Department music advisor to schools), Gordon Webb (National Orchestra trumpeter) and Ritchie respectively. In addition, tutorial sessions with principal players from the National Orchestra were held over the six-day workshop. Of the fifteen players chosen from Christchurch two – Robin Perks and Marjorie Dumbleton – were current members of the John Ritchie String Orchestra and joined previous members Angela Lindsay and Sheila Riches. A few months following the workshops, Angela Lindsay was selected as one of two trainees to

be granted full membership of the National Orchestra, the first time that this had occurred.

Ritchie guided the orchestra and its players to a successful and busy second half of the year, fulfilling engagements for now established events as well as continuing to promote and support its role as an excellent local ensemble which could be employed in additional and varied ways. Mid-year also brought in a formal decision by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's committee to a fee-based system where societies would be required to pay for the orchestra's services for both performances and rehearsals. Since the orchestra's schedule was looking increasingly busy, applicants were advised to make their requests in writing as soon as possible. Confirmation that the John Ritchie String Orchestra was now under contract with the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation was also made; four public concerts and a total of thirty-five rehearsals of three hours was expected to lift the musical standard to an increasingly higher level. Published programmes provided notification of the changed orchestra's status: 'John Ritchie String Orchestra: under the direction of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation'.

Standard fare by the orchestra included schools concerts (Kirkwood Intermediate School and Burnside High School on 2 June and at Hillmorton High School on 12 October), providing string players to Alex Lindsay for The New Zealand Ballet's 1961 season in June, university recitals, studio recitals for radio (3YC on 27 June; *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* by Mozart and Hindemith's *Five Pieces*), and a production of a 45 RPM recording of seven song accompaniments for school singing.³¹⁹ There were also provincial choirs' recitals, a choral festival organised by Lloyd Peach in conjunction with the Adult Education Department of the university in September, and the third and final subscription concerts in December of both the Harmonic Society and the Royal Musical Society performing *Christmas Oratorio* (Bach) and the *Messiah* (Handel) respectively. The participating choirs for the choral festival from North Canterbury, Lincoln Choral

³¹⁹ Revolutions per minute.

Group and the South Brighton Choral Society were supported by guest conductor Dr Denis Wright (O.B.E.) and pianist Clare Peach while Ritchie conducted the orchestra's performance of Britten's *Simple Symphony*.

The first Christchurch Arts Festival took place from 1 to 16 of July 1961. While various arts were represented including poetry, drama, fine art and ballet, music performances of varying styles with local, national and international players – jazz, choral, organ, piano, harmonica, chamber, orchestral and broadcasts – dominated. A lunchtime recital at the Canterbury University Hall by the John Ritchie String Orchestra was included in the programme. Their performance on 6 July of *Variations on 'Go from my Window, Go'* (anon); Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and *Five Pieces for Strings* by Hindemith attracted complimentary reviews which cited 'excellent tone, a poised balance, flexible expression, and well-disciplined precision' by the (sixteen) players with Ritchie's conducting described as unobtrusive 'but with decided efficiency'. Accompaniment to the Christchurch Harmonic Society's rendition of Verdi's *Requiem*, also for the festival, however, was provided by the National Orchestra of The New Zealand Broadcasting Service following their participation with their third subscription concert in the same week.

The John Ritchie String Orchestra's second concert of the season in the Caledonian Hall the following month was likewise appreciated by C.F.B. and M.T.D. Whilst the orchestra performed all the works admirably including Handel's overture *Parnasso in Festa*, Violin Concerto in G minor by Vivaldi with new leader John Dodds, Hindemith's *Five Pieces*, *Go From My Window, Go* and Percy Fletcher's *Folk Tune and Fiddle Dance*, the highlight was the penultimate piece *Dies Natalis* (Gerald Finzi) with soloist Anita Ritchie. Described as a 'magnificent performance' by Anita and orchestra, M.T.D. opined that this was performed with 'some of the best vocalism [...] heard from this artist' and that the conductor read the orchestral score 'with a high degree of musicianship'.

While the orchestra had a successful year musically in 1961, the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's annual meeting early in the year raised concerns

about the lack of local support which was deemed detrimental to the financial state of the organisation and its plans to support and develop the orchestra further. Of an initial circulation of one thousand musical persons, only one hundred and thirty- eight subscriptions for 1961 had been received. This raised a mere total of two hundred and nine pounds: 'This is rather a poor response from the Christchurch public', President Mr Connal stated. 'Increased membership would assure the foundation of a stable income [...]. The fulfilment of the foundation was linked with the development and performance of the John Ritchie String Orchestra'. To promote further subscriber interest, notes on the front of their first programme of the year penned by the secretary Athol Mann urged the public to apply in support of the orchestra. The meeting ended with the election of officers which included Vernon Griffiths as vice-president, and musicians Ritchie, Bill Hawkey, Robert Field-Dodgson, Charles Foster-Browne, and lawyer and arts aficionado Gerald Lascelles amongst the committee members.

The John Ritchie String Orchestra began 1962 accompanying the Harmonic Society as they performed Haydn's *Creation* on 27 February which was followed soon after by the orchestra's first subscription concert on 1 March at University Hall. This recital was part of the Christchurch Festival, seemingly an amalgamation of an existing floral festival and the 1961 Arts Festival.³²⁰ The orchestra presented a programme of Vivaldi, Mozart, Wagner and Bartók with concert pianist Tessa Birnie; the Vivaldi items Sinfonias No. 1 in C Major and No. 3 in G Major together with *Seven Rumanian Folk Dances* by Bartók were broadcast later in the month on 3YC. The ensemble consisted of fourteen string players and was augmented with woodwind and brass for two of the items, Mozart's Piano Concerto in A Major and Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*: Trevor Hutton (flute), Michael Shorter and Roland Sussex (clarinets), Jack Goldsmith (oboe), Ross McKeich (bassoon), John Bryant (horn), and Gerald Marston (trumpet).

The string players included John Dodds (leader), Audrey Harris, Marjorie Dumbleton, Robin Perks, Nan Armstrong, Lois Bognuda, Susan Jones and Bryce

³²⁰ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1962-December 1961, '1962 Christchurch Festival', Festival Programme, 1962.

Hawkey on violins; viola players Elizabeth Cook and Romoloe Griffiths, with Thomas Rogers, Ellen Doyle and Joyce Rollinson (the replacement for Philippa Harding who had won a scholarship to study in Australia) on cello. The sole double bass player, eighteen year old Gerald Newson, son of senior lecturer at Christchurch Teachers' Training College, Keith Newson, was the most recent recipient of the 1962 bursary awarded by the Cambridge Music School, after being nominated as the outstanding contributor at its seventeenth school in January. Selected to play in the National Youth Orchestra in 1961, his experience on double bass was minimal, having only been playing for a period of two years. In 1967 Gerald moved to London to study with Stuart Knussen and became an associate player with the London Symphony Orchestra soon after. In 1969 he was made a full member and remained there until his retirement in 2008.

The venue was at capacity and the two ensuing reviews of the recital were excellent. Ritchie's directing was especially remarked on: 'To cope with the sparse orchestration, John Ritchie made the most of dynamic adjustments, the orchestra responding well in following his every demand' (M.T.D.) and 'High Standard Shown by John Ritchie Orchestra' wrote C.F.B.:

The orchestra was, at once, in splendid form as an artistic and well-drilled ensemble. [...]. *Siegfried Idyll* [...] tested the players' response to Professor Ritchie's directions with regard to balance, expression, and shaping of phrases [...] [but] splendid balance was preserved [...] and the interpretation was poetic and thrillingly effective. The members of the orchestra can fitly take pride in the high standard shown in this performance.³²¹

The orchestra's second subscription concert took place on 18 April just four days after accompanying the Musical Society with their performance of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. Once more, a guest soloist had been arranged, distinguished clarinettist and King Edward Technical College (KETC) old boy John McCaw.

³²¹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook: January 1962-December 1962, newspaper cutting [n.d.].



Figure 59: John McCaw with John Ritchie in Christchurch.
John Ritchie Scrapbook 1962. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Aided by McCaw's recent tour in Australia as first clarinet with the London Philharmonic, his month long visit was made possible with the support of the music department and the Christchurch Civic Foundation. As well as performing

with the John Ritchie String Orchestra's programme which included Ritchie's clarinet concertino, McCaw took masterclasses, recorded, and performed in Timaru with Maurice Till, and with the Auckland String Players before returning to London. His visit and the relationship between the two Johns was well publicised in the press and an article and accompanying photograph was taken during a rehearsal of the Ritchie concertino.

McCaw's playing was as excellent as expected, receiving glowing reviews while the orchestra certainly met the demands of the evening. The concertino was described as 'interesting' with a marked variety of styles and moods between each movement. The interaction between clarinet and orchestra, and changes in dynamics and rhythm were favourably commented on with the ending leaving the listener wanting more: 'The only trouble with this work is that there is not a lot more of it' (C.F.B.). The Concertino was later broadcast by 3YC on 5 June and again performed and broadcast in the General Overseas Service on 18 and 19 June by McCaw who performed it with the B.B.C. Scottish Orchestra conducted by Norman Del Mar.

By June, a decision had been made by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation to advertise for players of all orchestral instruments with the intention of forming a small professional civic orchestra for the city by November. The nucleus would be the existing John Ritchie String Orchestra but with only sixteen members, it was expected that a further six string players would be needed. Without additional financial support it was unknown whether the orchestra would be able to be maintained after its proposed six-week trial period; however it appeared that the committee had determined that the timing was right to proceed with the formation of the orchestra with the expectation that monies would be forthcoming once the orchestra had been established.

Advertising was expected to be limited to Canterbury as it was anticipated that there were sufficient players of ability and experience locally; however the committee would look further afield in New Zealand if necessary. (In the event, violinist Michael Thrasher arrived with his Christchurch-born wife from London

to join the orchestra for the first concert).³²² By August, sixty-one applications had been received for forty places and auditions began. Selection was made by Ritchie and orchestra leader John Dodds and in September the forty-two names of those selected were announced by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's President Mr Connal. A high degree of optimism for the venture in the hands of Ritchie as conductor and Dodds as leader was present: 'With the John Ritchie String Orchestra, the Christchurch Woodwind Quintet, and an already well-integrated brass group as our starting point, we can expect big things'. Rehearsals began in late October in preparation for the first concert on 19 November.

With the additional duties of the forthcoming civic orchestra, Ritchie's documentation of rehearsals and performances by the orchestra consolidated. His 1962 scrapbook shows a typewritten plan and account of the orchestra's activities from 12 June to 15 December; dates, (sometimes with times), category (rehearsal, broadcast or concert), type (Madrigal Singers, schools' concert etc.), venue, programme details, instrumentation (strings, augmented etc.) were all recorded. The professional nature of the John Ritchie String Orchestra and their requirements to meet the expected number of rehearsals and concerts for which they would be paid precipitated this step. Ritchie's second contribution to the *Musician's Digest* in July listed the fifteen players and included an overview of the John Ritchie String Orchestra's forthcoming commitments. Particular mention was made of performances which were to be held outside of the city centre in recognition of the various boroughs' financial support to the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation.

In August 1962 the orchestra began a series of recitals, also under the auspices of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation and arranged by the university's Adult Education Department, which took them outside of Christchurch and the Canterbury region. The first of these tours took the seventeen players, soloist Anita Ritchie, and the conductor to the West Coast of the South Island, firstly to

³²² Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1962-December 1962, 'City Orchestra Violinist; Motor Trip from England', newspaper cutting [n.d.].

Westport on Friday, 10 August then to Greymouth the following day. Both recitals were sponsored by the respective towns' Arts Council. Advertised as a programme to suit many tastes, the Greymouth and Westport concert attendees were reportedly given 'a rare treat' and 'memorable night' by the orchestra and soloist.

A similar programme was presented at the Timaru Technical College Hall later in the year on 17 October but this time Heather Taylor rather than Anita Ritchie presented a selection of songs. The concert was, disappointingly, not well attended as observed by the reviewer C.F.B.; 'Ritchie String Orchestra Pleases Small Audience [...]. However, the performers may feel satisfied that they did achieve their objective in winning the enthusiastic appreciation of those who did attend'.

The orchestra's accompanying obligations continued for the remainder of the year with three subscription concerts for each of the Harmonic and Musical Societies. A number of the choral programmes also contained orchestral only items which enhanced the John Ritchie String Orchestra's profile and gave audiences a range of listening experiences over a single recital. A programme of French music with the University of Canterbury Madrigal Singers in October was especially well-regarded. The John Ritchie String Orchestra performed four items including Ritchie's arrangement of Rameau's *Le Tambourin*. Ritchie's directing expertise was once more discerned: 'The orchestra [was] conducted with delicately poised balance in every meticulous detail'.³²³

The concept of a single theme for a programme was also executed by the Harmonic Society for their second concert in September. Dedicated exclusively to the works of Ralph Vaughan Williams, conductor Bill Hawkey with soloist Heather Taylor, accompanist Nan Anderson and George Martin on organ opened the programme with *Benedicte* for Soprano Solo, Chorus and Orchestra. The John Ritchie String Orchestra (augmented) then provided some orchestral fare with

³²³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1962-December 1962, C.F.B., 'Programme of French Music at University', newspaper clipping [n.d.].

Prelude from the *Charterhouse Suite*, *Fantasia on Greensleeves* and *Prelude on Rhosymedre* before the choir's rendition of the brief but beautiful *O Taste and See* closed the first half. After the interval Diana Parsons (soprano), Edmund Bohan (tenor) and Winston Sharp (baritone) joined the chorus and orchestra for *Hodie*. Although the reviewer (M.T.D.) lamented the lack of secular music in the programme, he applauded the orchestra's playing saying that they 'made the most of the appealing melodic content of *Greensleeves*' and the Prelude was 'given with discerning musicianship'.

Prelude on Rhosymedre was also included in the orchestra's recital at the university in September in which Christchurch composer and recent University of Canterbury graduate, Annea (previously Anna) Lockwood's new work *Dover Beach* for tenor and string orchestra was performed. Lockwood was also an accomplished pianist, accompanying her fellow students for examinations and participating in ensemble playing as recalled by Angela Lindsay:

Anna was a pupil of Gwen Moon and so she often would play for me as my accompanist [...]. I remember a [...] lecturer [...], an amateur viola player [...] and I was there around the time of Anna Lockwood and Philippa Harding [...] so they [Philippa and the viola player] would arrange evenings when you would go to his house and play [...] then if there was a piano involved, Anna would come too'.³²⁴

Lockwood had been an outstanding music student earning the Dr. J. C. Bradford Prize in Music and the Union of Graduates in Music Prize while studying for a Diploma in Music at the university.³²⁵ She left New Zealand for London early in 1961 on a Royal Schools of Music Scholarship and government bursary after the completion of a Bachelor in Music with First Class Honours. Lockwood studied at the London Royal College of Music, the Darmstadt summer schools, and at Cologne and Holland as well as at the Institute of Vibration and Sound,

³²⁴ Angela Lindsay, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Auckland: 16 June 2009). Recording and transcript held by the author.

³²⁵ Jennings, p. 98.

Southampton University under various tutors including Peter Racine Fricker and Gottfried Koenig.³²⁶

Lockwood embraced contemporary models of composition including electroacoustic music and developed her own style of composition outside the tonal strictures of music taught at Canterbury. Ritchie recalled his dismay at the direction her compositions had taken in the 1960s ('poor girl'), referring to her work with glass ('The Glass Concert') and burning pianos ('Piano Burning') as completely beyond comprehension in musical terms. In recalling her time as a student at Canterbury, he described her as a 'brilliant, brilliant girl' during an interview. He later expressed regret for the unanticipated course her music took yet acknowledged the esteem in which she was held by her peers, saying she 'could have been a brilliant girl; she's very highly regarded as it is'.³²⁷

The orchestra was commended for the inclusion of a composition by a local artist but the piece itself received a mixed review: '[T]he string orchestra writing is superior to that of the vocal line [...] imposing severe demands on the singer [...]. The music becomes more atonal [at the voice entry] and perhaps the influence of her tutor, P. Racine Tricker [sic], a noted "modernist," is responsible for this'.³²⁸ It is possible that the reviewer may well have been echoing what Christchurch's music establishment thought of Lockwood's new compositions but the university was quick to acknowledge her as an alumnus when she was later awarded the Theodore Holland Memorial Prize for three compositions: her Violin Concerto, a cantata *Heloise* and a work for soprano and flute *Seven Songs from the Greek* the following year.³²⁹

³²⁶ 'Anne Lockwood: Composer, Performer', *SOUNZ: Centre for New Zealand Music Toi te Arapūoru* <<https://www.sounz.org.nz/contributors/1064>> [accessed 19 July 2019]; 'Biography', *Anne Lockwood* <<http://www.annealockwood.com/bio.htm>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

³²⁷ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 13 October 2008.

³²⁸ Should be Fricker.

³²⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1963, newspaper cutting 'Honour for City Girl Composer' [n.d.]; Anne Lockwood confirmed that *Dover Beach*, *Heloise*, *Three Medieval Latin Lyrics*, and *Seven Songs of the Greek* were early works composed while at Canterbury: email to author, 20 May 2019.

On Thursday 15 November 1962 the Christchurch *Star* newspaper ran a full page article heralding the Christchurch Civic Orchestra's inaugural concert the following Monday at the Civic Theatre: 'Christchurch's New Civic Orchestra at Rehearsal' the headline ran.



Figure 60: Announcing the new Christchurch Civic Orchestra. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The programme was expected to have a wide appeal with music by Schubert, Beethoven, Haydn, Prokofiev, and Eric Coates and, with sufficient public support, it was anticipated that this would be the first of many such recitals. The *Press* also announced the impending occasion with a degree of anticipation: 'Big Event for ChCh'.³³⁰ It was expected that with a wide range of experienced players from the John Ritchie String Orchestra, the woodwind quintet, Brian Marston's group of brass players and a number of members who had played in the National and National Youth Orchestras, the audience could expect to hear an orchestra of professional standard playing music which would showcase all the elements of a

³³⁰ ChCh is commonly used as an abbreviation for Christchurch.

symphony orchestra. To this end, the programme opened with Schubert's *Overture in B flat* which was followed by Beethoven's *Symphony No. 1* and Haydn's *Concerto for Trumpet* with soloist Ken Smith. Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* narrated by Heath Joyce, and Coates's *London Suite* provided the fare for the second half.

Ritchie's eagerness to promote his and the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's success in establishing the orchestra in the city led him to be less prudent in his comments to the press, although these may have been taken out of context: 'It should now be realised from painful experience that the centralisation of orchestral resource, in a country of our dimensions and population density, does not work'. Commenting on the financial burden of transporting an orchestra around the country he continued: 'If regional development can be nurtured to a state of self-sufficiency, much of this financial waste can be removed'.

Shortly afterwards, comments by the Christchurch Recorded Music Society's editor, Mr T. S. Clarke, in which he appealed for the national orchestra, the 'white elephant' of the NZBC, to be discarded and its members returned to their respective home towns, precipitated clarification of his stance: 'Mr Clarke rightly calls for local support [...] but mistakenly couples this with an attempt to disestablish our chief national asset'. Mr Clarke's comments raised further ire in his plea for a full symphony orchestra by doubling the existing numbers and 'the fewer women players the better'. Letters to the editor from the public followed on both sides. 'Why Canterbury's Professor of Music should feel that he cannot praise one good thing without disparaging another I can't understand' wrote one irritated correspondent while another rose to his defence: 'Professor Ritchie has been a vigorous supporter of the National Orchestra. However he is correct [...] that centralisation has affected local orchestras'.

The orchestra's establishment was not without further controversy and letters to the editor signalled dissatisfaction over the audition process: '[M]any of these applicants have never been called for an audition and [...] I am annoyed to see a list of players published', and 'unsuccessful applicants received no notice of

cancellation regarding auditions, and were not notified of the orchestra's selection before it was made public' although these were tempered with other views and that 'it seems that some of the omitted auditioning has been found unnecessary because certain teams of players have been accepted intact'. The number of young members was also noted with concern and Ritchie was quick to point out that they attributed the young players' interest in orchestral music to the schools' instrumental music scheme. The youngest member was Papanui High School student, Pauline Drain, who was only fifteen years of age. Additionally, there were several other youthful members including Robin Perks, Brian Sandle, Warwick Slinn, Kathryn Evans and Dorothy Buchanan, included, Ritchie responded, because 'we feel it is wise to mix experience with youth [...]. We're looking to the future of the orchestra'.

On the evening of Monday, 19 November, the Civic Theatre was filled to capacity and the concert deemed a landmark moment in the history of orchestral music in the city. The performance itself was favourably reviewed, and its success owed to the orchestra's director and conductor:

Professor Ritchie [...] in a very short time, has welded the players into a sensitively responsive team capable of responding with unanimity to his finely-pointed requirements in balance, tonal qualities, expressive shadings, rhythmic impulse, and stylistic finesse in the interpretation of varied types of music.³³¹

Criticism was limited to the dominance of brass on occasion, due in part to the venue's acoustics and the less than ideal number of string players; otherwise an excellent balance between sections was achieved. Training college lecturer, Ernest Jenner, also penned a note the next day: 'The new orchestra is most promising [...]. The programme was a perfect choice [...]. I should think you've got things soundly established in one go'.

³³¹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1962-December 1962, C.F.B., 'Civic Orchestra in Inaugural Concert', *Press*, 20 November 1962.

The Royal visit to Christchurch on 16 February 1963 provided an ideal opportunity for the Christchurch Civic Orchestra to be heard for the second time. Indeed, this was an endorsement of its standing since such significant musical events had not previously been supported by regional means.³³² A public welcome was held in the afternoon at Lancaster Park where the orchestra accompanied nearly three thousand school children who sang a selection of songs under the baton of Keith Newson. John and Anita Ritchie, who had received royal invitations, attended the event. The evening concert organised by the Christchurch Civic Music Council included individual and combined items by the Royal Christchurch Musical Society and the Christchurch Harmonic Society, performed to the accompaniment of the orchestra. A lavish, printed programme was produced with full page photographs of the Royal guests, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, inserted after the title page. Information about the Civic Music Council and the list of its officers preceded the programme items followed by photos and notes of the three conductors.



Figure 61: Front cover of the 1963 Royal Visit Concert Programme. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

³³² Barton, p. 15.

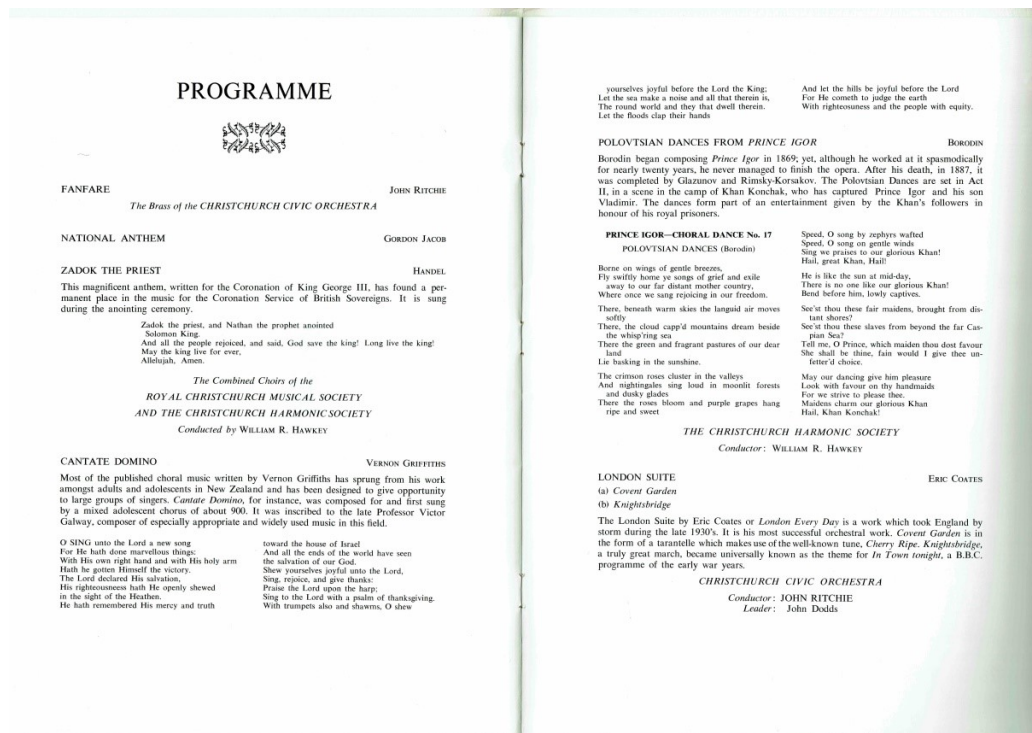


Figure 62: Inner pages of the Royal Visit Concert programme, 16 February 1963. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The recital opened with a fanfare for brass and percussion composed by Ritchie especially for the occasion which was played as the Queen and the Duke entered the King Edward Barracks where the event was held. After the National Anthem had been sung, the combined choirs performed Handel's *Zadok the Priest* before the Harmonic Society presented two items: Vernon Griffiths's *Cantate Domino* and Choral Dance No. 17 from Borodin's *Prince Igor*. The first half finished with Ritchie conducting the Civic Orchestra as they presented 'Covent Garden' and 'Knightsbridge' from Eric Coates's *London Suite*. Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens* and Handel's *Worthy is the Lamb* sung by the combined choirs completed the evening's fare.

As was customary, the Royals spoke briefly to the guests in attendance, exciting the public's curiosity; what they had said or asked guests about was of enormous interest at that time and the press reported accordingly. The performance of the National Anthem was expressed by the Queen to William Hawkey as a 'thrilling sound'. Sir James Hay, Chairman of the Civic Music Council advised that the Queen spoke highly of the musicians' performances while the Duke

acknowledged the love of music by the people of Christchurch, noticeable by their support of two such excellent choirs. The couple described the whole performance as ‘magnificent’ to Conductor of the Royal Society Choir, Mr Field-Dodgson and the Queen asked about the rehearsal time required to produce a major work. The Queen was also observed spending some time in discussion with Ritchie which was summarised as showing ‘a particular interest in the teaching of music at the University of Canterbury’. This interest was later described by Ritchie as a discussion around music theory classes which the Queen and her sister Princess Margaret had been required to attend. The Queen confided that she had found the subject very challenging and that Margaret had been more competent than her.³³³ She showed particular interest in Ritchie’s position as a music lecturer and how music was taught at the university.

By all accounts the concert was extremely successful, both in terms of the occasion and the performances by orchestra and choristers. The reviews highly commended both choirs and orchestra for their performances: ‘[T]he Christchurch Civic Orchestra, under the inspired guidance of its founder, John Ritchie, has truly fulfilled the highest expectations. No longer should we have to lean heavily upon the National Orchestra for future festivals’.³³⁴ The Queen’s sentiments of appreciation expressed on the night were borne out by an ensuing letter to Sir James Hay by Edward Ford, the Queen’s assistant private secretary: ‘The Queen warmly congratulates the conductors, choirs and orchestra on what was by any standard a most notable performance’.³³⁵ The director of the Royal visit, J. V. Meech, also penned a letter of gratitude to Hay adding: ‘Both Her Majesty and His Royal Highness were as impressed as I was with the high standard of the items, and in particular, enjoyed the rendering of *Zadok the Priest*’.³³⁶

³³³ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2009.

³³⁴ Ritchie papers, Ritchie Scrapbook 1962, Monitor, Loose cutting [n.d.].

³³⁵ Ritchie papers, Ritchie Scrapbook 1963, Edward Ford, copy of letter to Sir James Hay, 17 February 1963.

³³⁶ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1963, J. V. Meech, ‘Royal Visit 1963’, copy of letter to Sir James Hay (sent to Ritchie by Hay), 27 February 1963.

Ritchie also received letters of thanks and congratulations including one from Mr Connal in March: ‘On all sides I have heard nothing but praise for the performances of the orchestra [...], and particularly at the Royal Concert [...]. The whole orchestra [...] seized the opportunity to publicise itself most favourably’ and from the Anglican Bishop of Christchurch: ‘My dear Professor. I thought the orchestra was superb [...]. I have heard many choirs, orchestras and conductors in many parts of the world, and I have never been more satisfied than I was on Saturday night’.³³⁷ Also in 1963, Ritchie conducted the John Ritchie String Orchestra for two of his works which were broadcast on 3YC radio: *Suite for Strings* (1956) on 26 March and his arrangement of Frescobaldi’s *Fiori musicali* (1960, published by Price Milburn in 1979) later in the year on 4 December.

Several of the John Ritchie String Orchestra’s current and previous members received opportunities to further their musical careers during the time of its existence. Marjorie Dumbleton, who had also performed in the first Civic Orchestra concert left Christchurch to study under the Victorian Symphony Orchestra leader, Maurice Clare, in Melbourne, and earned a place amongst the first violins in the Australian Youth Orchestra, performing also for the Astra Chamber Orchestra Society. In May, the *Press* reported in their Women’s News & Views column that past John Ritchie String Orchestra violinist Rene Morgan had received a rather unusual request from the Halle Orchestra conductor, Sir John Barbirolli. The orchestra was due to rehearse for its evening performance of ‘a Shostakovich Symphony’ (probably the fifth which the orchestra did a studio recording of in the same year) when Barbirolli received news that the pianist was unable to appear due to a death in their family. Hearing that Rene Morgan was also a pianist (but perhaps not aware that she hadn’t played for two years), he approached her, score in hand, as she turned up, requesting that she play the piano part for the evening’s recital. A letter to her mother as reported in the *Press* elucidated:

³³⁷ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1962, G. A. G. Connal, letter to Ritchie, 15 March 1963; Alwyn Warren, letter to Ritchie, 5 March 1963.

He was in such a terrible flap I agreed to look at it, have a go, and found it only amounted to three short passages on the piano, none too difficult, and about three on the celeste [...]. It turned out all right. “Jub” (the orchestra’s nickname for Sir John Barbirolli) [...] was so grateful it was really touching. It is ludicrous when I think of how I slog away at the fiddle and get no thanks then, after a few notes on the piano, along comes immediate fame!³³⁸

The orchestra’s annual schedule now incorporated a variety of performances of specific categories: schools’ concerts, broadcasts, subscription concerts, choral accompaniment recitals, one-off guest accompanying and Civic Orchestra recitals. Ritchie continued to conduct, source music, organise the programmes, and complete arrangements for many of the works as well as fulfilling much of the administration duties required for the various events. The ability to stage a performance with full orchestra not only increased the repertoire; the opportunity for the orchestra to host guest soloists also emerged.

Two such events took place, one of which was with internationally acclaimed pianist, Julian Katchen in 1962, an event made possible by entrepreneur, Sir Robert Kerridge. Katchen had toured New Zealand several times previously since 1955 but this was the first time he was to perform with a local Christchurch orchestra. The arrival of the pianist was highly anticipated and the press with photographer in tow attended the pre-concert rehearsal in the Great Hall, reporting on the manner in which Katchen approached the players to request changes or fix blemishes: ‘He did not coerce; he coaxed [...]. Occasionally the conductor, Professor John Ritchie, looked a little anxious’. Any feelings of apprehension the pianist later owned to having about the orchestra’s ability were quickly allayed: ‘I need only ask them something once and they do just as I ask’.

³³⁸ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1962, ‘N.Z. Violinist Stood in for Pianist in Halle Orchestra’, *Press*, May 21 1963.



Figure 63: Ritchie and pianist Julius Katchen in 1962. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Katchen did, however, express disappointment over bookings for the afternoon recital since only a third of the available tickets had been pre-sold. Sales were also light for his two solo recitals a week later and although it was hoped that door sales might make for a fuller house for the concertos in particular, this did not prove to be the case. The orchestra opened the programme, presented in the afternoon and early evening of Sunday, 19 May, with the Overture from Beethoven's *The Creatures of Prometheus* before Katchen performed Piano Concerto in A Minor by Grieg and Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor.

The concert was musically an unqualified success and Katchen's comments afterwards brought the Civic Orchestra into further prominence: 'I enjoyed playing with the orchestra, and thought that the concert was beautiful. John Ritchie [...] had done a marvellous job'. Reviewer M.T.D. extolled: '[I]n the Civic Orchestra we have a body of players and a conductor who will be a great asset to the musical life of the city and will be competent to undertake any musical task allotted to them'. Most gratifying was a letter to Ritchie from Robert

Kerridge who had met with Katchen in Auckland: 'Julius Katchen was quite elated with the orchestral concert in Christchurch and spoke to me in the most glowing terms of the excellence of the orchestra under your direction'.

Ritchie's schedule was such that immediately after the concert's conclusion, he was driven to the airport for a flight to Auckland for an overnight stay before flying to Tauranga early the following morning to adjudicate the instrumental and vocal section of the Tauranga Competitions Society annual festival. With both the plane's arrival and the scheduled competition start time of 9.00 a.m., he was met by a society organiser and rushed to the venue for a slightly delayed commencement at 9.20 a.m. Of particular interest to competitors and public alike was the awarding of the aria scholarship of a hundred pounds, featured in the city for the first time, on the third day of competitions. Ritchie's assessment of the applicants and results were duly printed in *The Bay of Plenty Times* on Thursday, 23 May. Ritchie awarded baritones Eric Warr of Palmerston North and Aucklander Leo Barnett first and second respectively. Third place was awarded to the soprano whose 'voice possessed individuality of quality, [...] vital in character and full of warmth. She was an artistic musician and when some technical flaws were removed by experience her performances would attract attention throughout the country'. That person was twenty year old Malvina Major.³³⁹

Throughout the year a total of over six thousand mainly high school students were privy to a forty minute demonstration and performance of six to seven works by the John Ritchie String Orchestra. The West Coast tour also included public concerts at each of the towns completing the tour with a performance on the evening of Saturday, 6 October at Hokitika before returning to Christchurch the following day. The type written itinerary illustrates Ritchie's orderliness and attention to detail, also evident in his compositions, which featured in his various administration roles:

³³⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook January 1962-December 1962, 'Palmerston North Baritone Carries off Major Prize at Competitions Festival, *Bay of Plenty Times*, 23 May 1963.

THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER

- 8-45 a.m. Assemble in front of St Bede's College – Main North Road
- 9-15 a.m. Kaiapoi R. S. A. Hall CONCERT (on Main North Road just over bridge on the right)
- 10-00 a.m. Leave Kaiapoi for Rangiora (watch for turn off)
- 10-30 a.m. Rangiora Town Hall CONCERT (in Main Street)
- 11-15 a.m. Rangiora High School CONCERT
- 12-15 a.m. Leave Rangiora for Culverden (return to Main North Road then proceed north, turning left at Waipara Bridge).
- 1-15 p.m. LUNCH Culverden
- 2-00 p.m. Culverden Theatre CONCERT
- 3-00 p.m. Leave Culverden for Reefton (approx. 100 mles – Petrol?)
- 6.00 p.m. Arrive Reefton – DINNER at Café – disperse at 7 p.m.'

Friday and Saturday were similarly outlined and at the bottom of the page the following notes were made:

MUSIC, STANDS, MUTES, BLACK TIES, DINNER JACKETS ETC

PUNCTUALITY IS ESSENTIAL IN THIS ITINERARY

DRIVERS – TRY TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH ONE ANOTHER. DON'T

TRAVEL TOO CLOSE (300 yards is a comfortable distance in the country; close up in the towns)

PASSENGERS – HELP YOUR DRIVERS.

The first concert of 1963 by the John Ritchie String Orchestra took place in University Hall on 27 April with guest soloist singer, Janet Kenny, and violinist, Alex Lindsay, who had been invited to Christchurch by the Music Department to perform and undertake a masterclass before he left for overseas on an Arts Advisory Council travel grant. (In fact Lindsay had taken the rather unusual move part way through the previous year to give Ritchie Power of Attorney. This

coincided with difficulties in his marriage and put Ritchie in a rather unenviable position as the two families had been friends for a number of years, but also served Lindsay well during his time overseas. Nonetheless Ritchie executed this role with professionalism, overseeing various financial matters and liaising with Lindsay's solicitors as needed until its revocation on Lindsay's return and marriage dissolution in the latter part of 1967).

Every seat in the Great Hall was filled with the captivated audience enjoying the orchestra's opening work, *Chaconne* by Pachelbel before Alex Lindsay delighted with Haydn's C major violin concerto. John Ireland's *Concertino Pastorale*, three arias sung by Janet Kenny and Dag Wiren's *Serenade* completed the programme in the second half. The orchestra was once again much-admired for its further improved performance which was cohesive, well-balanced and 'now playing with professional finish under experienced direction', and 'regard for dynamics, phrasing, and synchronisation of attack were all in evidence aided by Professor Ritchie's studied direction'.³⁴⁰ The solely orchestral works were repeated in a free lunchtime programme in early May.

The Alard Quartet's arrival mid-year precipitated an immediate transformation of the John Ritchie String Orchestra as the members joined the orchestra as part of their employment contract at the School of Music.³⁴¹ Due to other commitments they were not able to participate in all the orchestra's events – the tour to North Canterbury and the West Coast in October clashed with the quartet's own tour to Wellington and the Coast for instance – however on 10 August the twenty-strong string orchestra led by John Dodds presented what was described as 'one of the best concerts that the orchestra has presented'.³⁴² The orchestra's additional players had been well publicised in advance of the concert together with a reminder of the pound for pound offer from the Arts Council, resulting in a well-attended recital in the Great Hall. To mark the occasion, there were no guest

³⁴⁰ Ritchie papers, 'Programmes' folder, loose cutting [n.d.]

³⁴¹ Jennings, p. 49. Previously the University Department of Music, from 1961 would be known as the School of Music.

³⁴² Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1963. K. R. N. Newspaper cutting [n.d.].

musicians; rather, the programme relied solely on the strength of the John Ritchie String Orchestra's ability and appeal to attract the audience and maintain their interest throughout. Three of the five works were also first performances by the Orchestra. The increase in depth and strength of tone was heard to full advantage in the closing item, Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for String Orchestra. Five Pieces* by Hindemith, Daniel Gregory Mason's arrangement of Brahms' *Chorale, Prelude and Fugue* and Sibelius's *Romance* also benefited with clarity of parts and richness of tone. Ritchie's *Suite for String Orchestra* (later Suite No. 1 for Strings), one of the new additions to the orchestra's repertoire, 'fully justified its place in the programme'.³⁴³ The work was perceived as well-crafted, and demonstrated the composer's breadth of knowledge of the instruments' qualities. Particular mention was made of the rhythmic diversity across the four movements.

The Christchurch Civic Orchestra made further appearances following the Royal and Katchen Concerts in the first half of the year; with the Harmonic Society's performance of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* on 21 September 1963 in the Civic Theatre, and later on 18 November when they performed Wagner's *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* Overture, Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, Dvořák's Slavonic Dance Opus 46, No. 8 (arranged by Stone), Intermezzo and Serenade from *Hassan* by Delius, Meyerbeer's ballet suite *Les Patineurs* and two Verdi songs, 'The Willow Song' and 'Ave Maria' from *Othello* with guest soprano Elisabeth Hellawell. Hellawell had previously performed with the orchestra, most recently with the Harmonic Society's first subscription in April. She received glowing reviews of her rendition of Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate* for that recital, and her Verdi performance was likewise deemed faultless. The orchestra of around forty-six players accompanied her superb, dramatic singing with aplomb and generally impressed with their playing for the remainder of the programme.³⁴⁴ Some faults were noted, particularly the variance between the sections; the strength of the strings was not always matched by the brass for

³⁴³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1963; V.G., 'Ritchie Orchestra Sets New Standard', review, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

³⁴⁴ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1963, November programme with forty-eight names listed but two names have been crossed out in pen.

instance, but this shortcoming was simply due to a lack of experience and was expected to be remedied by continuous orchestral playing.

Other recitals took place including The Royal Society's second subscription concert programme in October. The usual title 'The John Ritchie String Orchestra Augmented' (although this was used on their last subscription programme for the year) was replaced with 'Members of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra' signifying the orchestra's changing identity. Shortly afterwards the 'Civic Chamber Orchestra' (conducted by Ritchie) made its first appearance on a programme. A summation by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's president, G. A. G. Connal on the front page read:

While the constitution of a chamber orchestra varies from piece to piece, this group will, we hope, retain the stability of the other orchestras under the control of this Foundation. In three years we have accomplished our plan – three orchestras, a string orchestra, a symphony orchestra, a chamber orchestra.³⁴⁵

1964 began with high hopes for the continuing success of the Christchurch Civic Foundation Incorporated and its associated ensembles. A summation of the foundation's annual general meeting focussed on the progress made towards a full-time orchestra and specifically Ritchie's role in achieving this aim. Gerald Lascelles was effusive in his praise: 'Professor Ritchie has not only ensured the raising of ever improving playing standards, but has been most co-operative as a member of our executive'.

Ritchie acknowledged the orchestra's success of the previous year but in recognising that music world-wide was becoming increasingly reliant on patronage, voiced a warning that this was no time for complacency. He believed that a strong focus should remain on achieving what the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation had set out to do to ensure that the steps made to date were

³⁴⁵ Ritchie Papers.

not lost. He reminded the meeting attendees of the ‘impending tragedy’ of a major London orchestra which was on the brink of disbanding and urged forward planning to attract the best musicians.³⁴⁶ He was pleased to announce that for the first time, orchestral performances – concerts, broadcasts and recitals – had outnumbered rehearsals fifty three to forty-nine and a half. He believed that a full-time chamber orchestra of around twenty-four permanent players could be achieved in Christchurch within five years.

Indicative of its elevated standing in the community, the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation produced a leaflet advertising its subscription series of four concerts and Two Special Concerts by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra. Scheduled for 4 April, 30 May, 22 July and 3 October, the subscription series comprised one Chamber Orchestra and three John Ritchie String Orchestra recitals for a cost of one pound. Three of the advertised recitals would be conducted by Ritchie while visiting musician Boyd Neel was appointed to conduct the third subscription concert in July.

The chamber orchestra of twenty-nine players performed to a full house at University Hall for the first of these recitals in April 1964. The work achieved by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation to gain financial support from the community over the last year was evident on the printed programme; the number of sponsors listed had grown from only two or three previously to thirteen. This included some individuals together with a variety of well-known local businesses, musical and non-musical: Charles Begg and Company; Ballins Industries Limited (cordials and soft drinks); P.D.L. Industries Limited (plastics); Lane, Walker, Rudkin Limited (clothing); David Crozier Limited (motor car importers and engineers); Bunting and Company Limited (brushes); Scott Bros Limited (engineering, locomotives and coal ranges); N.Z. Refrigerating Company Limited; and Aulsebrook and Company Limited (biscuits).

³⁴⁶ This is possibly the Philharmonia Orchestra as indicated; Robert Cummings, ‘New Philharmonia Orchestra’, *AllMusic* <<https://www.allmusic.com/artist/new-philharmonia-orchestra-mn0000334008/biography>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

The following week Ritchie and fifteen of the John Ritchie String Orchestra players, including the Alard Quartet members, travelled north to perform in Nelson for the first time. A schools' concert at Waimea College on Friday, 10 April at 6.00 p.m. preceded the main performance the following evening at Nelson College. The programme consisted of established works by Handel, Mozart, Samuel Barber, Bartók, Sibelius, and Holst together with the Quartet's performance of *The Bullfighter's Prayer* by Turina. The college hall was at full capacity for the recital and the performance well-received. In the conclusion of his critique of the evening's recital, K.G.W. wrote: 'John Ritchie is to be congratulated on his orchestra's very high standard of control, technique, and interpretation shown throughout a most enjoyable programme'.

On 23 April, 1YC and 3YC broadcast Bernard Kearns's production of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, one of several special programmes – plays, music and talks – aired over a ten-day period for Shakespeare's fourth centenary of his birth.³⁴⁷ While many of the programmes, including Benjamin Britten's opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, were BBC productions, there were also some home-grown contributions. This was aided by the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation (NZBC) who commissioned a few New Zealand composers to write the incidental music for several of the plays. Ritchie was tasked with composing for *As You Like It* which featured on the first day of the broadcaster's series, the date of the bard's birth.

The music for strings, oboe, recorder and voices, performed by the John Ritchie String Orchestra and conducted by Ritchie, was one of five works Ritchie composed that year. Owen Jensen and Douglas Lilburn also received commissions; Jensen conducted the NZBC Concert Orchestra as they performed his music for *Macbeth* while Lilburn's music was heard during *Henry IV* on 'Sunday Showcase'. The latter was broadcast on all stations although not all of the programmes were heard widely across the country. *As You Like It* for instance was aired only on 1YC in Auckland and Christchurch's 3YC.

³⁴⁷ Ritchie papers, Ritchie composition record book, Ritchie has noted this composition as 'NZBC TERCENTENARY PRODUCTION – BERNARD KEARNS FEB 1964'.

The main performance in May of that year was the John Ritchie String Orchestra's second subscription concert in the University Hall on the thirtieth; however Ritchie also found time to compose and arrange musical accompaniments which he then directed for the university's graduation ceremony on 7 May in which his previously written fanfare (1958) for SATB and orchestra was played. He also revamped a J. C. Bradshaw work for choir (words by former classics' professor, Hugh Stewart), *Cantuariensium Carmen Academicum*, with the addition of brass – two trumpets, three trombones and two tubas – which was performed with the one hundred voices of the Canterbury University Choir during the procession's entrance to the venue, the King Edward Barracks.

The John Ritchie String Orchestra's May programme utilised the available soloists and provided the Canterbury audience with one classical and three twentieth-century works including two not previously performed in the region; *Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra* by Australian composer Malcolm Williamson (1931-2003) with soloist Michael Toovey, and Bartók's *Divertimento* which concluded the evening's performance. The recital opened with Mozart's *Symphonia Concertante*, K364 with soloists Donald Hopkins and Raymond Page who were joined by the other two Alard Quartet members, and soloist Elizabeth Rogers for Herbert Howells's *Elegy for Viola, String Quartet and String Orchestra* in the third item after the interval. Williamson's Concerto, which followed the Mozart and was the most recent work, was likely brought to Ritchie's attention by his connection to Frank Callaway. Composed in 1960, it won first prize for a University of Western Australia competition and premiered two years later with Callaway conducting. Summarising the orchestra's performance, C.F.B and M.T.D wrote respectfully:

Highest admiration for their skill shown in the performance of this extremely difficult music together with thanks for the opportunity to hear it, must be given to Professor Ritchie and his orchestra. [...] John Ritchie conducted with his usual complete grasp of what is required to inspire his players to give authentic and satisfying performances.

Ritchie's increasing efforts to support a high standard of performance and professionalism including the establishment of the string orchestra were reflected in the number of Christchurch players who were selected for the Youth Orchestra in 1964. Of the twenty-four chosen, fourteen were string players many of whom continued successfully as performers, notably John Chisholm (violin) who became Assistant Concertmaster for the NZSO (died 26 December 1984), his twin brother Allan (cello, NZSO), Brian Sandle (cello) and Gerald Newson (bass). Several were active members of the John Ritchie String Orchestra and its augmentation included other outstanding musicians; Kathryn Evans (violin), Pauline Drain (clarinet) as well as the sole brass selection, Ross Harris on tuba, whose career as a composer flourished a few years after graduating from Canterbury University in 1968.

The Civic Orchestra Foundation's third subscription concert was widely advertised due to the much anticipated arrival of visiting conductor Boyd Neel to the city. Neel was in the country at the invitation of the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation and his two engagements thus far had been very successful, with both the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra and the Auckland Symphony Orchestra being described by the conductor as 'excellent'.

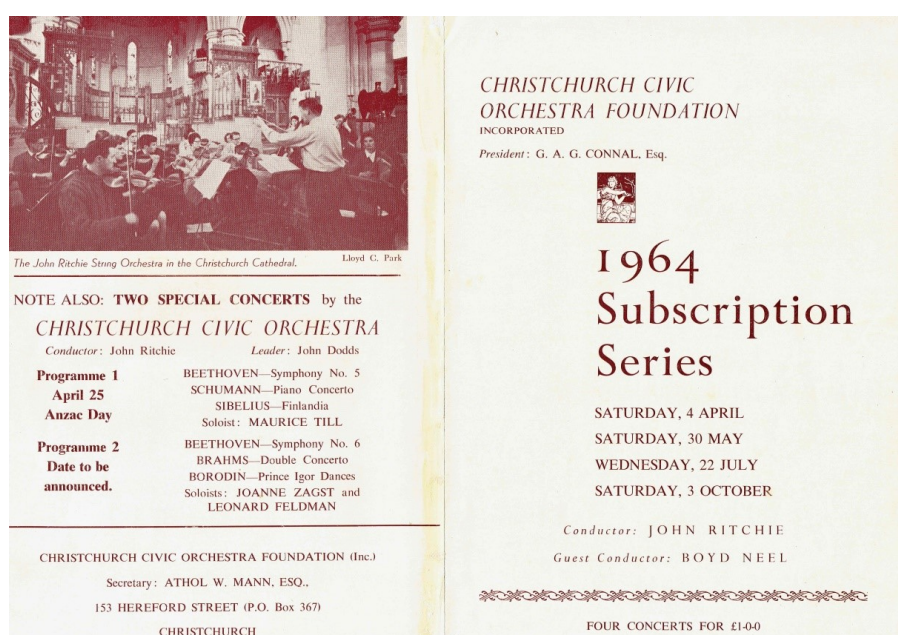


Figure 64: Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation 1964 Subscription Series programme front and back. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

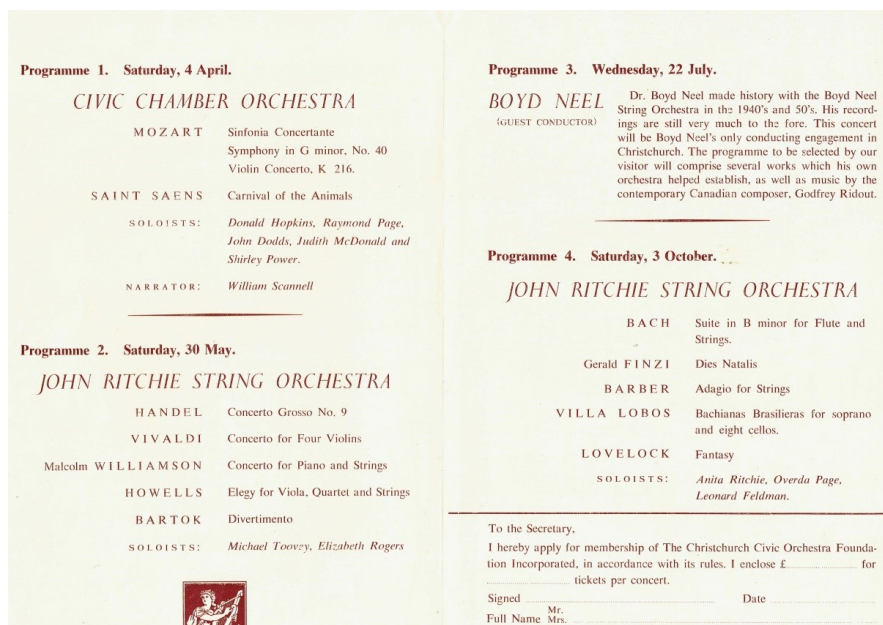


Figure 65: Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation 1964 Subscription Series programme inner. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Neel's last visit to Christchurch (and New Zealand) with his own orchestra in 1947 was purported to be the impetus behind the founding of several New Zealand orchestras hence his response to the John Ritchie String Orchestra which developed similarly to the Alex Lindsay orchestra was highly anticipated. Neel was at the time Dean of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, a position he had held since 1953. He spoke of the electronic music laboratory which was housed in the opera school, one of three departments at the conservatory:

Your New Zealand composer, Douglas Lilburn, recently came to study at the laboratory for three days and was so enthralled he stayed for three months'.³⁴⁸ Electronic music was misnamed [...]. It should not be called music, because purposely it has no rhythm or melody. Those who listen expecting music are therefore disappointed. It is simply an exciting new experience in sound.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ A rather abridged version of events. See Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 218-220 which describes a pre-arranged visit to Neel in May 1963 and a return in August. This was probably intended to be three days but was subsequently extended to three months following an invitation to stay as long as he wished by the studio's director Dr Myron Schaeffer.

³⁴⁹ Ritchie papers.

Neel's visit came amidst the city's preoccupation with plans for a town hall. The City Council had recently announced that a national competition for the hall's design would be held and, understandably, due to the proposal's importance and cost to the city, the residents were discussing and debating any decision which the project's committee made. Neel was duly asked by the local press for his opinion of the proceedings for the building before mention was made of the purpose of his visit. While Neel's response to the Town Hall question is not directly related to this topic, a cutting pasted into Ritchie's 1965 scrapbook in which Sir James Hay refers to Neel's view that on no account should they consider a 'large, all-purpose hall' which could be used for banquets, dances and sports events as well as theatre and music, indicates Ritchie's interest in the new performance centre. Ultimately, Neel's views were heeded and the complex, incorporating a mainly tiered performance space in which staging could fulfil any orchestral needs was built and opened in September 1972.³⁵⁰

Commenting on the rehearsal with the John Ritchie String Orchestra two days previously in preparation for the concert that evening Neel said: 'They are a lovely orchestra [...] and they play extremely well. I enjoyed the rehearsal thoroughly. In fact Professor Ritchie has done all the work and I have nothing to do but enjoy it'. The eighteen string players led by John Dodds with Michael Toovey on continuo performed under Neel's baton to a full house in University Hall on Wednesday, 22 July at 8.00 p.m. Traditional fare was presented for the opening; a Handel Concerto Grosso followed by Vivaldi's Concerto Grosso in B Minor for four violins while the closing work for the first half – *Two Etudes* by Godfrey Ridout – and the entire second half, comprised the modern works, *Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky* by Arensky and Alan Rawsthorne's *Concerto for String Orchestra*.³⁵¹ The concert received a 'well-deserved ovation' and outstanding reviews which emphasised the orchestra's ability to further raise their performance standard under the leadership of the visiting conductor whose thorough knowledge of each score and the player's response to his demands

³⁵⁰ Ritchie was the musical director at its official opening in September 1972.

³⁵¹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1964, aerogramme from Ridout to Ritchie, 3 Sept 1964.

ensured that the audience was privy to a concert which ‘was one of the best by any orchestra heard this year’.³⁵²

A letter from Boyd Neel dated 16 September, evidently in response to recent correspondence from Ritchie, appeared to reinforce Neel’s view of Ritchie’s endeavours with the John Ritchie String Orchestra: ‘I felt that it was [in Christchurch] that I had the finest orchestra to work with during the whole of my tour’. Assuming that such a statement might appear overstated since his tour also included the symphony orchestras of Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, he continued:

[C]hamber groups taken from these larger ensembles are never quite the same as one which is working always in the smaller sphere, like yours is. The whole style of playing, as you know, has to be different, and it seems to me that you have achieved a wonderful ensemble through working together for so long a time [...]. You produced exactly the sound which I have always tried to cultivate with string ensembles. It is really remarkable what you have achieved with material which is obviously not all of the first class, a fact which I know you would be the first to acknowledge [...]. I am sure your efforts in Christchurch will go from strength to strength, as you are obviously making it the most vital musical centre in New Zealand.³⁵³

Unexpectedly, the Alard Quartet announced that they would be finishing their tenure mid-year, well before their three year term expired, to take up a permanent appointment at the Pennsylvania State University: ‘We sincerely regret that our time here has been so short. It has been a most enjoyable, stimulating, and satisfying experience for us. We hope that the university and community feel that our brief presence here has been of value to them’. While the quartet’s decision could be understood – a return to the States was always intended, such appointments were seldom offered, and an enhanced salary beckoned – it was a

³⁵² Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1964; M.T.D., ‘Conductor and Orchestra in Masterly Form’, newspaper cutting review [n.d.].

³⁵³ Ritchie papers, Letters; the letter confirms the receipt of a recording of the Ritchie’s *Clarinet Concertino*.

blow to Ritchie, the university and the community that the first resident quartet was leaving so soon after its well-publicised arrival in the city.

August also saw in the announcement for the third and latest round of Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council grants by the council's deputy chairman, Mr J. V. Meech. Once again the Civic Orchestra Foundation was rewarded for its continued gains in establishing a full time orchestra with a five hundred pound increase on the previous year to two thousand pounds. Of the total twenty-five thousand pound sum awarded, approximately two thirds was granted to music related organisations while the remaining third was reserved for fine art activities.

Three months later the Civic Orchestra Foundation president, Mr G. A. G. Connal, announced that subsidies had also been approved by the Arts Council and NZBC for a joint scheme to assist both Christchurch and Auckland in developing a regional orchestra. At the time Christchurch boasted twenty-four players and eleven specialists for local performances. The funding signified an additional fourteen touring players for the New Zealand Opera Company and Ballet Trust's respective annual seasons' performances in the South Island. Further, it was expected that a replacement for the Alard Quartet could be made soon and such performers would continue to enhance the playing of the Civic Orchestra Foundation's orchestras.

September was marked by a number of radio broadcasts of the John Ritchie String Orchestra around the country in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland. There were no New Zealand works aired although most were contemporary (tonal) composers: Vaughan Williams, Lars-Erik Larsson, Barber, Howells, Rawsthorne and Elgar with Pachelbel's *Chaconne* and Vivaldi's *Sinfonia No. 3* also featuring. September also provided an opportunity for listeners to hear a new Ritchie work, *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* for solo soprano and semi-chorus, a setting of three poems by Richard Crawshaw, specially composed for the Christchurch Harmonic Society – although the third is a setting of *Lord when the sense of thy sweet grace* (1957), perhaps indicative of time-constraints he was currently under due to his workload. The particular challenge for the composer was to write the accompaniment using

instruments required for Bruckner's Mass in E Minor which featured in the second half of the programme.³⁵⁴ Ritchie conducted the work with Anita Ritchie as soloist and its broadcast on 3YC was well-received with both composition and performance lauded. Any fears that the limited instrumentation might appear to be wanting were immediately allayed: 'Professor Ritchie's scoring for this medium seemed much more effective than Bruckner's' (C.F.B.). The work's setting was described as 'sensitive and perceptive [...], beautifully conceived changes of harmony [...], very colourful writing [...] [and] accompaniment most striking'. It was hoped that a further performance in the near future would eventuate.³⁵⁵

In early December the Alard Quartet performed Ritchie's recently composed String Quartet in G minor (1962), its first airing in the United States. A review was subsequently published in the Wilmington, Ohio News-Journal. Ritchie was described as a contemporary traditionalist: 'It is a work that is modern, yet pleasingly so [...], a difficult piece'. Ritchie's use of parallel intervals, particularly minor thirds, with interesting harmonies was also noted. The success of the work was somewhat marred by the beginning of the 'arduous' fourth movement; however this lapse was overcome with the successful fugal allegro giocoso, with the work finishing as it had begun.³⁵⁶

The John Ritchie musicians finished the 1964 year with a Civic Chamber Orchestra concert of thirty-three players on Saturday 19 December at University Hall with a traditional programme which included Handel's Concerto Grosso No. 4, 'The Clock' symphony by Haydn, and Mozart's Serenade in C minor for Eight Wind Instruments. The concert concluded with arrangements of three folk dances by Ritchie: *Durham Reel*, *Captain Jinks* and *Virginia Reel*. Described by C.F.B. as an 'attractive programme', the concert was well-attended and enjoyed. The final folk dance set was remarked on as having 'happily festive atmosphere and

³⁵⁴ Woodwind (0222), brass (4230).

³⁵⁵ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1964; M.T.D., 'New Ritchie Choral Work Very Impressive', review, cutting [n.d.].

³⁵⁶ In discussions with the author, Ritchie expressed his dissatisfaction he had felt for some time with the fourth movement and subsequently rewrote it with Anthony's assistance in 2004.

were played with elegant poise and vivacity'. Further, Ritchie's arrangements 'retained the essential naivety of the tunes while clothing them with charming and sophisticated harmony and orchestration'.

Towards the end of 1964 preparations were well underway for the Pan Pacific Arts Festival to be held in Christchurch from 22 February to 6 March 1965. Nine committees oversaw the planning including an Arts Committee of which Ritchie was a member. Committee members comprised of local body, business and arts leaders as well as academics; Professor H. J. Simpson from Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury sat on several of the committees, and Royal Christchurch Musical Society director, Robert Field-Dodgson, and Christchurch Liedertafel conductor, Keith Newson, sat on the Ceremonial Committee. Several international guest artists and musicians were invited to appear including British conductor, Sir Malcolm Sargent, and the Victorian State Symphony Orchestra. Solo violinist, Australian Beryl Kimber, and John Hopkins, a former conductor of the NZBC Symphony Orchestra were also performing. Five local choirs; the Musical and Harmonic Societies, the Liedertafel and Liederkrantzchen together with the University's Madrigal Group joined to form the Festival Massed Choir for the occasion.

Ritchie and the Civic Orchestra Foundation players also had various performing roles in the proceedings. Ritchie was the Director of a series of master classes and subsequent student concert by the Berkshire Quartet from Indiana University which preceded the quartet's performances for the Festival under the auspices of the Chamber Music Federation of New Zealand. Ritchie completed an arrangement of *Star Spangled Banner* for the New Zealand Opera Company's production of *Porgy and Bess* and spent considerable time on the orchestral arrangements for *The Nutcracker* in preparation for the New Zealand Ballet season's opening on 20 February. The ballet was subsequently included in the festival programme's first three opening days. An article in the *Press* described the scene at the music department one week prior to the opening night:

The temperature was in the eighties. Professor Ritchie worked at a tape recorder, his shirt unbuttoned to the waist [...]. ‘You won’t be long, old man, will you?’ he appealed to the *Press* reporter. ‘I’m very busy. I’ve been flat out for the last fortnight. I have been working late most nights on the parts of the ballet. That’s the music for *Porgy and Bess*’, he said, waving at a chairful of scores. ‘It’s very difficult. But we’ll manage it’.³⁵⁷

Ritchie conducted the Christchurch Regional Orchestra (in effect a replacement for the NZBC Concert Orchestra) for the ballet’s performances of *The Nutcracker*, the orchestra’s first appearance following the introduction of the subsidised scheme in late 1964.³⁵⁸ The delineation of the players was portrayed in the programme by listing the players of each group, namely the twelve members of the New Zealand Theatre Ensemble and the Christchurch Civic Orchestra respectively. The ballet, which had been sold out prior to its season start, was a resounding success and the orchestra was deemed to have ‘made a most impressive contribution’. Reference was made of the limited time available for the players to rehearse together as a body, and of Ritchie’s contribution: ‘Tribute must be paid to John Ritchie, who has prepared the Civic Orchestra...and who conducted with imagination and sympathy’.

Ritchie also received a personal letter of thanks from the ballet’s Executive Director, Beatrice Ashton: ‘The dancers were terribly pleased to work under your baton, and I heard nothing but praise from anyone speaking of the quality of the orchestra. I do feel that this is in very large part due to your patience and understanding, both of your players and our dancers’. Ritchie, together with Ashley Heenan, was also instrumental in preparing the orchestra for the New Zealand Opera’s Christchurch performances of *Porgy and Bess* conducted by Dobbs Franks which ran from 1 to 6 March. A letter from the New Zealand Opera Company’s general manager, Ulric Williams, to Ritchie acknowledged his and the orchestra’s efforts in the success of the performance: ‘I am truly grateful [...] for

³⁵⁷ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1965; E .B. L., *Press*, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

³⁵⁸ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1965; ‘Nutcracker Quiet Start For Festival’, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

the very great co-operation received from you and the members of the orchestra [...]. We have tremendous appreciation of all [...] put into this venture’.

Ritchie and the John Ritchie String Orchestra also performed at two Christchurch Cathedral Festival lunchtime recitals firstly on the Festival’s second day and then later in an accompanying role. The orchestra opened the 23 February concert with Handel’s *Concerto Grosso No. 4* before performing the advertised and only New Zealand work of scale in the festival, Lilburn and Curnow’s *Landfall in Unknown Seas* with narrator Bernard Kearns which was also broadcast later that day at 6.30 p.m. on 3YC. Vernon Griffiths’s review stated:

[T]he work provides strong evidence than [sic] an indigenous New Zealand culture exists and that there are New Zealanders who can give concise, clear expression to it. Ultimate and complete appreciation of the work by a person grown to manhood overseas and then becoming a citizen of this country may be taken as a sign that he has become a New Zealander in spirit. It is good that Curnow’s poem and Lilburn’s music, available in recorded form, are heard in the nation’s schools.³⁵⁹

M.T.D. was less complimentary, conceding that the work ‘has its moments’ but suffered from ‘constructional weaknesses’, perhaps ‘emphasised by its proximity to the Handel work’. The orchestra was also commended for its ‘disciplined performance’ (M.T.D.) and ‘sympathetic understanding’ of the music (V.G.) although Griffiths reserved most of his praiseworthy comments for the Handel, noting Ritchie’s efforts in securing ‘controlled phrasing, notable accuracy in the detail of rhythmic movement, precise attack and release, and unanimity of the treatment of nuance’.

³⁵⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1965, V .G., ‘Evidence of a Native Culture’, newspaper cutting [n.d.]; this review by Griffiths is significant for its apparent approval of Lilburn’s work considering a seemingly previous difficult relationship between the two men.

Together with the subscription and other notable concerts previously mentioned, the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's ensembles performed variously during the latter part of the year in 1965. Engagements included Schools' concerts; performances in support of Canterbury choral societies as well as the Royal and Harmonic Society choirs; fifteen performances with the New Zealand Opera Company in Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill from 26 August to 12 September (*Don Giovanni*, Mozart and *Il Trovatore*, Verdi); and similar performing duties with the New Zealand Ballet Gala Season in November. For the Fourth Subscription Concert on 14 December, John Dodds led the orchestra, as he had done in its various forms for the previous four and half years, for the last time. The Civic Orchestra Foundation's decision to begin placing players' positions on a full time professional standing had unforeseen consequences. One of these was Dodds's reaction when he was advised of the change and asked to apply for the leader's role:

The orchestra had been playing for a while and then they wanted to advertise for players. And I said "well, I'm not applying, I don't want to be leader, I'm off!" [...]. And even when they wanted to go professional they didn't have the money to pay.³⁶⁰

Cameo – John Dodds

John Dodds was born in Ashburton, a small town about one hundred kilometres south of Christchurch, and moved to Christchurch with his parents and two sisters at around the age of four.³⁶¹ Not long after their arrival and before the age of five, Dodds's father, himself a violinist, engaged Arthur Gordon as his son's violin tutor. Gordon, who lived in a large, two storey house on Colombo Street near Bealey Avenue, had studied the violin in Rome and was highly thought of in Christchurch both as a soloist and teacher. The local competitions were part of Dodds's musical experience and he recalled his first foray into competitive

³⁶⁰ John Dodds, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Wellington: 16 August 2010). Recording and transcript held by the author.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

performing at age fourteen in the fourteen-and-under-sixteen category. He was pleased to be placed second and the following year improved his placing to first.

Dodds studied for all of the graded examinations of both Trinity and Royal College, sitting grade seven twice with a different syllabus one year for additional experience and playing so that he had something to aim for over the remainder of the year. His two sisters also received musical tuition and while his youngest sister learnt both piano and violin, aside from some teaching early on, did not pursue music as a career. His older sister, Mary, who was his senior by five and a half years, became an accomplished pianist and teacher who won the Halls Memorial Scholarship ahead of Maurice Till.³⁶² The siblings benefited from their respective talents with Mary filling the role of accompanist for Dodds in both competition work and examinations.

The Dodds's also received performance experience at concert parties which were organised during the war years by a Mrs Pearce and together along with a group of other performers, they would be taken in an army truck to various communities including the sanatorium on Cashmere Hills, prisons, and mental hospitals. Whilst Dodds gained valuable performing experience, his schooling suffered as there was no time left outside of his musical life to attend to homework. He duly left school at the end of his third high school year and, following in his father's footsteps, entered into an apprenticeship as a joiner and shop fitter while continuing his music studies. Dodds spent about thirteen years with Gordon before commencing his studies with Harry Ellwood. The Ellwood Trio, comprising siblings Harry Ellwood, (violin), Polly Ellwood (piano) and George Ellwood (cello), toured New Zealand but at some point were stationed in Christchurch when Dodds was around

³⁶² Mary Phipps (née Dodds) was the author's piano teacher from the ages of nine to seventeen. She was very strict and exacting. She would much rather have been performing than teaching but she was forbidden to participate in any performance related activities by the rules of the religious sect she belonged to. At some point early in Phipps's career it came to the church's attention that she had broadcast for radio. She was admonished by the sect's elders and was required to cease any performance-related activities from that time on. (Julie Johnson, as relayed to her by her mother).

seventeen to eighteen years old. Dodds recalls other notable violinists who were also pupils of Elwood; Gordon English and Natalie Butcher who were a few years Dodds's senior. Dodds's repertoire expanded greatly under Elwood's tutelage to include solo works and concertos which he had not been privy to previously. When Dodds was twenty-one, Elwood, who was good friends with violinist Vincent Aspey, encouraged him to apply for a position in the National Orchestra. He was duly accepted and moved to Wellington in 1955.

Dodds spent three years as a rank and file violinist in the orchestra – number three in the second violins – before deciding to move on and travel to England with two friends and further his violin studies abroad. Although the orchestral position was full-time, Dodds considered the pay fairly poor at around one thousand five hundred pounds per annum and furthermore, there was little opportunity for advancement especially without the benefit of study overseas. He also tended to get itchy feet after being in one place for longer than a year or two, but before he had finalised his travel arrangements, car-mad Dodds took up the offer of a well-paid job in a garage in South Auckland instead.

Through contacts in Auckland, Dodds was soon playing violin again, travelling to Hamilton at Peter de Rose's request to perform a Mendelssohn concerto with the Hamilton Civic Orchestra where he met his future wife Ruth. After a year of making the journey regularly between Auckland and Hamilton for the orchestra, he decided that it might be easier to shift to Hamilton and resolved to become a bus driver which he considered would suit both him and his music commitments. Within a relatively short time, Dodds was driving buses during the day and leading the Hamilton orchestra in the evenings and weekends. He married Ruth in Hamilton towards the end of his first year in the city but subsequently decided that he would return to Christchurch with his wife to take over the running of the joinery factory which his father was no longer able to manage due to ill health.

Not long afterwards, at the end of 1959, John Ritchie turned up on their doorstep one Sunday afternoon and asked Dodds if he would be interested in joining the John Ritchie String Orchestra. It was made clear that the position of leader could

not be offered because David Stone had that role. Dodds was perfectly happy to simply play in the ensemble and the notion of performing without being drowned out by the brass in a symphony orchestra was immediately appealing, as was the baroque style of much of the string repertoire.

Dodds was appointed leader when David Stone left the orchestra. He continued to enjoy performing in the group but was less satisfied when the orchestra was augmented with other instrumentalists due to the varying abilities of the players. Dodds believed that they reduced the level and quality of the orchestra's performance at times. Nonetheless there were some young string players in the orchestra such as Robin Perks who were equal to the task. They had been carefully selected by Ritchie, and his management of rehearsals ensured that they gained the experience needed while they played alongside the more experienced string players. The repertoire was exclusively selected by Ritchie which, in Dodds's view, worked very well since he always chose works which were eminently playable. Ritchie's own works were likewise well suited to the John Ritchie String Orchestra because, Dodds believed, Ritchie was attuned to the instruments' sounds individually and collectively. Other New Zealand compositions did not sit so easily with such ensembles however, and it was always puzzling to Dodds that recognition of Ritchie as a composer remained muted.

Highlights during those John Ritchie String Orchestra years included a tour of the West Coast of the South Island which was overseen by Ritchie and required Dodds to tow a caravan for the transportation of the music, stands, and double bass. The Coast communities were very supportive and welcoming and would always invite the performers to an after-concert party. On one occasion it was the early hours of the morning before everything had been finally packed up at the venue and they had arrived at their destination. The house was in darkness and some hesitation ensued as to whether the inhabitants should be roused. Someone took charge and knocked on the door and although the hosts had retired for the evening, they immediately turned on the lights and gramophone. The ensuing

reception left the performers in no doubt of the locals' appreciation of the John Ritchie String Orchestra's visit to their part of the world.

Christchurch audiences, too, were very receptive. The majority of performances were held at the Great Hall; however Dodds also recalls accompanying the singers for the 1963 Mobil Song Contest in the Civic Theatre, an outdated venue in which the players froze during rehearsals because the heating had broken down, but which was miraculously repaired in time for the evening recital. After the 1963 concert Dodds ran into National Orchestra conductor John Hopkins as he was returning to his car who, Dodds said, 'gave me a talking to!' He berated him for remaining so long in Christchurch and suggested in no uncertain terms that he should return to Wellington to join the National Orchestra immediately and waste no more time in the south. Although the timing did not quite suit Dodds's circumstances then, he later heeded this advice, although by then Hopkins had been replaced by Juan Matteucci.

Ritchie was a well-liked and respected strings conductor. His occasional visits to conduct in Wellington which Dodds remembered later were well-received and the players appeared to like him. He was not a flamboyant or dynamic performer such as Alex Lindsay was; rather he presented with a certain reserve and modesty. Due to factors of time and circumstance Ritchie did not gain the experience required for full-time conducting although neither is there any indication that in fact he sought that. While the John Ritchie String Orchestra continued to perform to a good audience and receive good reviews, by 1965 trouble which had been brewing for some time amongst the city's musical populace, caused a split which was thought to have been brought about by the two musical societies.

By this time the decision had been made that at least some of the players would be offered full-time positions but all applicants would be required to audition. While Dodds was content with a part-time position which allowed him to work at another job, the money on offer with the orchestra was only the same as he had been earning in Wellington several years previously. The thought of having to audition under such circumstances for a role he had been occupying for several

years was just too much for him. Deciding in a moment that he had had enough, he phoned Gordon Connal to advise him that he would not be applying for the job and in fact would not be playing with the orchestra again. Dodds left for Wellington soon after and was offered a rank and file position with the first violins on the spot.

Dodds continued to perform with the National Orchestra for thirty-five years, ultimately successfully auditioning as principal of the second violins. Additional performance opportunities arose; as second violin to Alex Lindsay with the New Zealand Quartet alongside Farquhar Wilkinson (cello) and Vyvyan Yendoll (viola), and tutoring the young players from the newly formed Schola Musica. Ritchie's support and his faith in Dodds's ability as a relatively youthful musician at a particularly unsettled time in his life was invaluable; similarly his time with the John Ritchie String Orchestra was a vital stepping stone on his way to a successful career in music.

Leadership and the Evolving Orchestra

The beginning of 1966 was marked with change when Dodds's fellow violinist, Aage Nielsen, also left the John Ritchie String Orchestra suddenly. According to Dodds, Nielsen arrived for a planned rehearsal and asked where Dodds was. On being advised of Dodds's departure, Nielsen was so dismayed that he responded by saying that without Dodds, he would not be staying and immediately packed up and left. This created somewhat of a crisis within the ranks. Lambert Scott was brought in to cover for the position for the first part of the year before it was announced in March that Louis Yffer, a Vienna-born British national, had been appointed to the position of leader of the Christchurch orchestras: the Civic Orchestra, the Civic Chamber and the John Ritchie String Orchestra. Scott continued meantime in the role until Yffer's arrival in September.

In January 1966 dissatisfaction was also expressed by the New Zealand Opera Company at the Arts Council's solution to the Opera's need for a professional orchestra. While the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation may have appeared pleased with the arrangement which saw its players engaged to provide support

for the Opera for South Island performances together with the professional theatre ensemble, the Company's chairman of directors, Fred Turnovsky, was far from happy and expressed it publically: 'It was not correct that the New Zealand Company at any stage expressed satisfaction with the orchestral arrangements for 1965', and further, that such an arrangement was 'artistically unsatisfactory, financially wasteful, and administratively unworkable'.³⁶³

According to another report, the Council had ignored the Opera's objections for the proposed scheme 'involving a core of professional musicians, regional semi-amateur orchestras and ad hoc arrangements which finally broke down because it proved unworkable'.³⁶⁴ Ashley Heenan, the scheme's coordinator and musical advisor, subsequently responded to the Company's strictures, attributing any problems at its own door. Alluding to fundamental musical difficulties in the *Porgy and Bess* production, he reminded them that they had not provided the orchestral parts to the players six weeks before the first performance as agreed – and in fact the players first sighting of some of the music was at the combined rehearsal less than a week before opening night. Further, the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation continued to provide support to both opera and ballet for the year firstly for the New Zealand Opera Company in its programme for *Fledermaus* (Johann Strauss) in August and then for the Ballet in October.³⁶⁵

Notwithstanding that the typewritten schedule for the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation in 1966 began with a rehearsal on 26 April, the John Ritchie String Orchestra began the year with three schools' concerts on the morning of 18 February.³⁶⁶ They performed a varied programme of relatively light music to around sixteen hundred pupils from Linwood High, St Mary's College and Heaton Street Intermediate. This was followed soon afterwards by the John Ritchie String

³⁶³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; 'Company "At No Stage Satisfied"', (Wellington), newspaper cutting, [n.d.].

³⁶⁴ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; 'N. Z. Opera Company in Jeopardy', New Zealand Press Association (Wellington), 19 January 1966.

³⁶⁵ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; Ron Scott is named Chief Mechanist in the programme as part of the touring staff.

³⁶⁶ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966.

Orchestra's first subscription concert on 26 February and the Civic Orchestra accompanying the Harmonic Society's performance of Haydn's *Creation* on 5 March. The John Ritchie String Orchestra's programme began with two baroque works: by Handel, *Pharamond* Overture and Francesco Geminiani's Concerto Grosso in C minor, followed by four twentieth-century compositions including Larry Pruden's *Dances of Brittany*.³⁶⁷

The preponderance of modern music in the recital aligned with Ritchie's review of the previous year's lunch-time offerings by local and visiting musicians: 'I am a bit disappointed that we are not getting a better and more favourable proportion of contemporary works'. This did not necessarily refer to New Zealand composers of experimental or non-tonal music: 'Contemporary representation was pretty thin. This year we are hoping to repair that with the Prague Quartet'. It was hoped 'that some modern Czech scores will come with the quartet'.³⁶⁸ These sentiments were published in an article which strove to highlight the music department's influence and benefits to Christchurch beyond its role within academia, citing Ritchie's role as conductor for the foundation's orchestras as a significant contributing factor: 'Professor Ritchie himself follows firmly in Dr Bradshaw's footsteps, of accepting public responsibility [...]. His worth in our musical life is immeasurable'.

Further endorsement of the department's influence in music in Canterbury was the announcement that recent graduate John Jennings was travelling overseas to study for two years at the University of Sydney after winning an Australian award under the Commonwealth scholarship and fellowship plan. Jennings had previously won several music prizes while studying music and was at the time both a composer and performer as organist at St Thomas's Church in Fendalton as well as assistant organist to Foster-Browne at the Christchurch Cathedral.

³⁶⁷ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966, the programme lists the works as John Ireland's *Concertino Pastorale*; Larry Pruden's *Dances of Brittany*; Thomas Dunhill's Movements from *The Chiddinfold Suite*; *March – on a Surrey Folk-Tune*, *The Mummers Arrive*, *The Vision of Richard Peyto*, *Dryads and Fauns*, and Percy Grainger's *Mock Morris*.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 'City Benefits from Music at University', newspaper cutting [n.d.].

Pruden's work together with Ireland's *Concertino Pastorale* was repeated at the University's lunch-time concert in the University Hall the following week. According to press reports at the time, the free concerts, now in their twenty-second year, were consistently well attended by around three-hundred people made up of students and staff as well as members of the general public. Both concerts were favourably reviewed with *Dances of Brittany* receiving special comment as an 'interesting and exciting composition making strong demands on the orchestra's feeling for colour and expressive sensitivity [...] performed with thoroughly commendable finesse and lyrical understanding'.³⁶⁹

The orchestra's performance in *The Creation* on 5 March 1966 at the Civic Theatre was not a particularly creditable one especially in the opening overture although the players appeared to redeem themselves in the accompaniments. The apparent state of unpreparedness of the orchestra may have been due to a lack of rehearsal time but it may also have been a reflection of the change of personnel and the recently announced move towards professionalism. These factors were likely to create uncertainty within the group and a period of instability might be expected, particularly in the light of the Opera Company's grumblings around the orchestra's performance for *Porgy and Bess*. Nonetheless the report from the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation's Annual General Meeting showed that the Foundation anticipated that the opera and ballet engagements would continue, with the disclosure of income and expenditure indicating a profit of nearly one thousand eight hundred pounds. Optimism for its continued progress towards professionalism for its players was therefore assured.

While the John Ritchie String Orchestra adapted to the personnel changes, further reforms appeared imminent as Ritchie signalled his intention to stand down as conductor of the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation. Delivering his customary conductor's address at the annual meeting, he conceded that it was now time for 'a cadre of full-time players together with a full-time leader'. While this was not quite yet the case for the role of conductor, he expected that this would

³⁶⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966.

change within eighteen months. The expansion during the previous year was elaborated on; there had been a hundred and one rehearsals, nearly double the fifty-one in 1964, and performances with New Zealand Opera and Ballet alone had increased performances by sixty-one.

Alluding to questions raised regarding the process and speed of establishing a full-time professional orchestra, it was apparent that Ritchie's views remained unchanged. He believed that 'gradual, organic growth was preferable to spectacular metamorphosis', and that 'The part-time player [...] was not necessarily inferior to that of a full-time player. The Young New Zealander was the person who must be looked to if long-term success was to be achieved'. Additionally, one should not commit 'too early, for artistic and financial reasons' and that 'co-ordination on a national scale was vital to the security of all orchestras'.

The much anticipated arrival of the Prague Quartet was celebrated with their Inaugural Concert on the evening of 16 April 1966 at University Hall. The programme comprised Mozart, Dvořák and Bartók string quartets and was preceded by a lunchtime concert a few days before with Maurice Till. C.F.B commented that while there could not have been much time for the pianist and string players to rehearse together, this was not discernible; rather that it appeared Till 'had been playing with these string players in many performances'. Ritchie too expressed his delight in his report to the Vice-Chancellor describing their performance as 'quite dazzling'.³⁷⁰ The quartet members would appear as guest soloists for some of the Foundation orchestras' performances rather than integrated members of the ensembles as their predecessors had been. A core part of their duties was expected to involve teaching, and they were to present two winter evening recitals in place of similar concerts usually given by one of the Foundation ensembles.

³⁷⁰ Ritchie papers, Vice-Chancellor folder, letter dated 2 July 1966.

Such was the interest in the group's presence in the city that the *Press* published an article featuring the musicians' wives who had travelled with them.

Notwithstanding cultural differences between New Zealand and Czechoslovakia, the column provided an insight into the role of women of the times, details which aligned with Anita Ritchie's role as facilitator of her husband's career while both homemaker and performer such as: 'The women do not always travel with their husbands. Usually they stay at home to look after their families.' Further, 'Mrs Karlovská, who is petite and youthful [...]', and referring to three of the women who were raised in the mountainous region of Czechoslovakia, it was noted that 'they have spent many happy hours in the ice and snow [...] [and] hope to indulge their interests during the New Zealand winter'. Lastly of Mrs Konicková who 'formerly a pianist, collects folk songs and dances, and is particularly interested in the traditional embroidery of Czechoslovakia'.

Shortly after the Civic Orchestra's Burnside concert, the Prague Quartet presented the first of the sixteen Beethoven quartets – No.1 in F minor and No. 6 in B flat – they were to present over the course of their residency. 'It would be more difficult to imagine a more satisfying performance', M.T.D. wrote the following day and 'each performer is an artist of the very first rank'.³⁷¹ The Quartet then joined the Civic Chamber Orchestra for its second subscription concert at University Hall on 7 May. The thirty-three strong orchestra comprising twenty string players, two each of flutes, oboes, bassoons, horns and trumpets with timpani (and included composers Dorothy Buchanan on violin and horn player Ross Harris) opened the recital with Haydn's Symphony No. 4 in G major while violinist Bretislav Novotný and viola player Jaroslav Karlovský performed as guest soloists for the second work, Mozart's *Symphonie Concertante* in E flat. The John Ritchie String Orchestra resumed for the second half with *Contrapunctus I* and *IX* from Bach's *The Art of Fugue* before the Quartet united with them for the closing work, Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro for String Quartet and String Orchestra*. 'Memorable Concert by Civic Orchestra', hailed C.F.B. Not only was the Quartet's high standard of performance a feature, their presence drew the best

³⁷¹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; M .T. D., 'Magnificence in Quartets by Beethoven', newspaper clipping [n.d.].

from the orchestra's players with 'each member seeming to be inspired by the glorious playing of the soloists'. The Haydn and Elgar works were later aired on radio.

A further two recitals with the Prague Quartet followed, the John Ritchie String Orchestra's third subscription concert on 10 August and a concert with the Christchurch Civic Orchestra in September, which were similarly regarded. Both programmes were designed with the Quartet's players in mind. The August recital included Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in D minor with Novotny and Pribyl, *Trauermusik* for Viola and String Orchestra (Hindemith) with Karlovsky, and Josef Suk's *Serenade for Strings* which the John Ritchie String Orchestra and the Prague Quartet performed together. The opening work, Mozart's Symphony in D major, and Sibelius's *Romance for String Orchestra* which opened the second half were performed by the John Ritchie String Orchestra. 'The concert was a personal triumph for Professor Ritchie and for all the players', wrote C.F.B. 'The playing was thrilling throughout the whole course of the work, and the orchestra backed up these superb soloists with commendable skill in attention to detail', and in summary stated: 'It was a much better concert than we recently had from a fully professional orchestra – both in the programming and the performance'.³⁷²

On 21 September 1966, a forty-one strong Civic Orchestra led by the newly arrived Louis Yffer and with previous John Ritchie String Orchestra leader John Dodds also present, performed with the Prague Quartet, their final appearance with the orchestra, at the Civic Theatre to a large and appreciative audience. Performing three large works: Mozart's Symphony No. 35 (the *Linz Symphony*), twentieth-century Czechoslovakian Bohuslav Martinu's *String Quartet with Orchestra* – a work which was introduced by the Quartet and its first New Zealand performance – and Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D major with soloist Bretislav Novotny, the recital was decreed a great success.³⁷³

³⁷² Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; C. F. B., 'Triumph for Ritchie String Orchestra', newspaper cutting [n.d.].

³⁷³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; 'Quartet Concerto Premiere, Etc.' (Arts and Entertainment), *Press* [n.d.]; M. T. D., Reviews and notes on Compositions and Events folder.

Attendees signalled their appreciation of the concert personally to Ritchie: ‘Congratulations to orchestra quartet Novotny and you John a momentous concert’, and further:

Golly, oh golly, oh golly! [...]. I am still away up in the clouds. Few musical experiences have thrilled me so much [...]. The glory was yours, Novotny’s, the Quartet’s, and the Orchestra’s; but mainly yours [...]. A personal triumph for you, and how richly deserved.³⁷⁴

Foster-Brown’s review was more muted but equally laudatory, praising the ‘splendid unity in the string playing [...]. The Prague Quartet played with thrilling éclat, but great credit must also be given to the orchestra for its expert support’.³⁷⁵

Five days later on 26 September the Prague Quartet presented two movements from Haydn’s String Quartet Opus 67, No. 4 at a reception to welcome the new Vice Chancellor, Professor N. C. Phillips, and on 2 October, performed their penultimate performance at University Hall. This completed the Beethoven String Quartet series.

The Prague’s final and twentieth performance took place a few days later in the music department’s last lunchtime recital of 1966 to a capacity crowd at the same venue. Fittingly, in deference to the man who ‘was responsible for the engagement of this famous group’ (M.T.D.), they performed the adagio and scherzo of Ritchie’s quartet before Frank Gurr joined them for Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet in A major. Prior to their departure, the players spoke of their five months in Christchurch, expressing their belief that their greatest contribution was their teaching rather than their performance: ‘This is something that will not be so obvious at first [...]. In music it is terribly important that students gain the maximum technique before they are twenty years old – after that it is really too late – so that is why we have concentrated on this part of their training’ (cellist,

³⁷⁴ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; Maisie Kilkelly, Inland Telegram, 22 September 1966; Robert Field-Dodgson, handwritten letter, 21 September 1966.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., C.F.B., ‘Civic Orchestra Delights’, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

Zdeněk Koníček). ‘We have enjoyed our stay in Christchurch very much. We think you are fortunate in that life is not too rushed – although your School of Music is as busy as any’.³⁷⁶

With the departure of the Prague Quartet, plans already underway to bring another quartet to the city were made known. The Christchurch Civic Music Council announced a pound for pound subsidy up to two hundred and fifty pounds for public gifts made to assist in the venture hoping to quickly raise five hundred pounds. The total amount required would be more than the nominal six thousand pounds cost to the music department for the Prague Quartet ‘chiefly because the Prague Quartet granted us such generous terms to establish the idea of the university quartet in New Zealand’.³⁷⁷

The John Ritchie String Orchestra players continued to be in demand throughout the year as they performed a variety of accompanying roles in 1966. In addition to their customary engagements with the Christchurch Harmonic and Royal Societies’ concerts, they accompanied the Auckland Dorian Singers with director Peter Godfrey during their visit to the city in June over Queen’s Birthday weekend, and for St Mary’s Merivale centenary celebrations with the combined parish choir and the University Madrigal Singers.

A unique venture by the ‘Christchurch Symphony Orchestra’ was undertaken mid-November when Ritchie and the Civic Orchestra of forty players performed a half hour lunchtime concert at the premises of a major clothing factory in Christchurch namely Lane, Walker, Rudkin Ltd.³⁷⁸ According to reports, the enterprise was devised by Ritchie and the company’s personnel officer over ‘their regular beer at the University Club’. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding

³⁷⁶ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; ‘Quartet Emphasises Teaching’ *Press* (Arts and Entertainment), [n.d.].

³⁷⁷ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; ‘Extra Funds for New Quartet’, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

³⁷⁸ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; so named in the *Press*, 18 November, although still officially the Christchurch Civic Orchestra.

the idea's inception, the performance in the factory's large canteen was a resounding success.³⁷⁹

Hundreds of staff filled the cafeteria or listened outside on the lawn via amplified sound while the orchestra played *Knightsbridge March* (Eric Coates), a *Linz Symphony* movement (Mozart), *Stranger on the Shore* and *Slick Chick* (Brian Barrett), and three movements from Don Gillis's *Symphony 5 ½* including *Scherzofrenia* as the finale.³⁸⁰ The orchestra was given a rousing applause at the end of the concert.



Figure 66: Ritchie conducting the Christchurch Civic Orchestra as they perform for hundreds of workers at Lane, Walker, Rudkin Ltd. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

³⁷⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; 'Canteen Lunch-hour Concert', *Press*, 18 November 1966; 'Unique Experiment for Factory Workers', newspaper cutting [n.d.]; Reviews & Notes on compositions and/or Events' folder.

³⁸⁰ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1966; 'Unique Experiment for Factory Workers', newspaper clipping [n.d.]; variously stated as six hundred and nine hundred, the company employed around fourteen hundred people.

A similar programme was presented for the third area concert at Hillmorton High School a few days following on 19 November with guest artist contralto Patricia Payne, the winner of the 1966 Sydney Sun Aria Contest. The entire Don Gillis symphony was performed and Holst's *St Paul's Suite* conducted by Brian Barrett was added, together with three items performed by Payne including her winning aria *O Love! from thy Pow'r* from Saint-Saëns' *Samson and Delilah*. M.T.D. wrote of the orchestra's performance of the *Linz Symphony*: 'Excellent unison in the opening adagio showed the admirable control which Professor Ritchie maintained over the orchestra', while the spiritoso, menuetto and presto 'were played with a clarity of texture and skilful competence'. Patricia Payne's performance was equally recognised, and in noting her impending trip to London to further her studies, the reviewer foreshadowed what was to come: 'Her career as a concert and operatic artist should be a most successful one'.

The final performance by the Civic Chamber Orchestra of twenty-two players for the year was the Gerald Lascelles production of Menotti's Christmas opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Lascelles, a noted Christchurch actor and producer was joined by University of Canterbury Fine Art's lecturer and sculptor Tom Taylor who designed the set and costumes. Originally forecast to be shown the previous year, Ritchie had been hoping to stage the opera for three years and was delighted for it to be finally brought to a Christchurch audience.

By the time of Dodds's departure, Ritchie too had arrived at the end of his conductorship of the orchestra. Dodds remembered that Ritchie spent not only a vast amount of time in conducting, organising and music arranging; he was known to spend a considerable sum of his own money to keep the orchestra solvent, a situation which had become untenable particularly with the growth of his family. He also had great demands on his time which had been especially taxing since his promotion to Head and Professor of Music. Ritchie's final 'Conductor's Report to the Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation (Inc.)' of 1966 included a summary of the orchestra's endeavours and future plans providing insight into some of the issues which had contributed to his resignation:

I relinquish the conductorship of the orchestras in the full knowledge that time for such a move is ripe. Together with some of the players whose other responsibilities categorize them as part-time, the strain, the consumption of time and the necessity to consider other things of equal importance, I believe that the next two years will produce a change in the basic functioning of the whole organization. Most of us spent more than one hundred evenings in 1966 working orchestrally.³⁸¹

The report ended with an extensive memorandum of thanks to all who had contributed to the success of the orchestra during his time at the helm including players, administrators and board members, funding and other institutions, schools, and musical organisations.

Ritchie had by now cemented his place as a leader in the Canterbury community and he regularly attended or presided over significant local events. The Addington Workshops' Workers' Educational Association Male Voice Choir celebrated its twenty-first anniversary on Saturday, 30 September 1967. It was a highly-regarded event in which the programme detailed an official welcome by the Works Manager followed by a variety of musical items conducted by past and present conductors and interspersed with addresses by various dignitaries and persons who were associated in some way with adult education such as the WEA. The Christchurch Mayor, Sir George Manning, and Ritchie were amongst those who spoke during the event. Conductors included its founder in 1946, Vernon Griffiths; Ritchie, who conducted his own *Zoological Logic*; Doug Sloane, conductor between 1956 and 1959; and its current conductor, Charles Martin.

The scheduled Harmonic Choir's subscription concert duly took place in early 1969 and, as arranged prior to Hawkey's departure to Australia, Ritchie conducted the Choir with the Christchurch Civic Orchestra as they performed Handel's Coronation Anthems and Concerti Grossi on 12 and 14 March in Christchurch Cathedral. Other conducting duties were also undertaken for various recitals including a lunchtime string orchestra concert on 25 September 1969. The

³⁸¹ Ritchie papers, JRSO box.

orchestra consisted of students together with the members of the University's resident ensemble, the New Prague Quartet (later known as the Czech Quartet).

In 1972, after years of discussion and debate and an eventual decision by the Christchurch City Council to proceed with the facility, construction on the Christchurch Town Hall was near completion, and preparations for its much awaited opening in September were underway. There was enormous focus on this event and a large number of personnel, including Ritchie, were involved in its planning. Nonetheless, Ritchie carried out yet another significant engagement the preceding month. Under the artistic direction of April Cantelo, the Canterbury School of Music with Ritchie as conductor presented Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* over three days from 3 to 5 of August in the Ngaio Marsh Theatre.

It was an ambitious undertaking with a large cast of soloists and chorus, dancers, actors and an orchestra of twenty-one led by Chloe Moon. Many of the vocalists were at the beginning of what eventuated as successful careers in music although not necessarily as singers: Judy Bellingham, Keith Lewis, Philip Norman, Peter Hind, Barry Brinson and Heather Taylor to name a few. The printed programme was an artistic feat in itself and incorporated facsimiles of a few pages of Purcell's original 1693 score. The reviews were complimentary with Ian Dando heading his report thus: 'University does Purcell proud'. Further, the orchestra under Ritchie's direction 'combated the dry acoustic of the theatre and produced stylish and accurate playing with well-judged tempi'.³⁸² Vernon Griffiths for the *Press* too considered that it had 'contributed notably to the general success' and that 'Professor Ritchie [...] had the whole musical performance under control so that this score [...] was given its due of careful preparation and spirited interpretation'.

Ritchie had shown a keen interest in the advancement of a purpose built concert hall for Christchurch as indicated by his observations during his trip to the States in 1956 to 1957. This was shared by many in the Christchurch music scene at the time including Griffiths (then Professor of Music at Canterbury) who had been

³⁸² Ritchie papers, Loose Newspaper Cuttings folder.

appointed to the Town Hall Promotion Inc. committee in 1958. Understandably, by 1972 there had been a number of personnel and organisational changes, and Griffiths was no longer on the committee although Athol Mann and Robert Field-Dodgson who had also been founder members were re-elected in July of that year. Other groups were also formed to manage specific responsibilities including a committee to plan the Inaugural Concert on the evening of 30 September and a production of *Henry V* the following day in the James Hay Theatre. This comprised administrative, artistic and musical personnel and included, amongst others Ritchie, Bill Hawkey, Robert Field-Dodgson, Winston Sharp, and Gerald Lascelles. Ritchie was also commissioned by the Christchurch City Council to compose a processional piece and a fanfare for the opening events.

The Christchurch Town Hall official opening ceremony took place on the morning of 30 September 1972. It was a momentous occasion for the city and both the opening proceedings and the evening concert were telecast from local channel CHTV3. Fittingly, high level dignitaries were invited to give an address including both the Prime Minister, John (Jack) Marshall, and the leader of the opposition party, local Sydenham Member of Parliament, Norman Kirk. The remaining official guests were the Lord Mayor of Adelaide (following the recent establishment of a sister relationship between the two cities); Christchurch's Mayor, Norman Pickering; Councillor and Chairman of the Town Hall Committee Hamish Hay (later elected Mayor in 1974); Councillor and Chairman of the Waipara County Council (now part of Hurunui District Council) C. N. Mackenzie; and the Governor-General, Sir Denis Blundell, who opened the complex. At 11.00 a.m. when invited guests were seated and the Skellerup Woolston Band had performed a selection of music, Their Excellencies Sir Denis Blundell and Lady Blundell together with the Official Party entered the auditorium to the strains of Ritchie's especially composed *Processional Flourish and March for Brass*. The work was later described by C .F. B. as 'splendid and embracing' and worthy of repeat performances when circumstances of any special welcome to the city arose.³⁸³

³⁸³ *Press*, 2 October 1972.

Ritchie's part in the events continued into the evening as his fanfare *Flourish for an Occasion* launched the Inaugural Concert in the Town Hall's packed out auditorium. Performers for the programme included a Canterbury Representative Band, the Royal Christchurch Musical Society, the Christchurch Civic Orchestra, and Maurice Till who was the soloist for the final work on the programme, Beethoven's *Fantasia in C Minor* for Piano, Chorus and Orchestra. Following the fanfare and six bars of the National Anthem, Mervyn Waters conducted the Band as they performed works by E. Gregson, Arthur Bliss and an arrangement of Beethoven's *Creation Hymn* by Hayden Bebb, while a new work *Cantata for Christchurch*, written for the event by British composer Eric Ball, was performed by the choir and band under the baton of Field-Dodgson.

Following the twenty-minute interval Ritchie entered the stage to conduct the Orchestra for Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*. According to his own account he was rather, and perhaps noticeably (at least to the orchestral players), inebriated having enjoyed a drink or two throughout the day; perhaps unwisely he had not forgone his usual Saturday afternoon rendezvous at the Carlton with friends. This likely affected the overall execution of the work since, although generally well-received by both reviewers, C. F. B. observed that 'Apart from occasional lack of strict cohesion and rhythm [...] it was a good performance' while Ian Dando noted: 'In spite of weightless string tone in the opening and slight untidiness [...] the interpretation [...] was well-conceived and penetrating'.³⁸⁴

Ritchie had continued as President of the Civic Foundation since withdrawing from directing duties in 1966. In 1972 founder member Athol Mann was secretary treasurer and musician friends Winston Sharp and Clifton Cook were administrator (but known as the 'Manager') and board member respectively of the Christchurch Civic Foundation. The board, which had increased from its original number of four to around twenty, decided to advertise for the position of a full time conductor. As it happened, from the time of Ritchie's resignation in 1966, the Foundation orchestras had continued without a permanent conductor, instead

³⁸⁴ *Press*, 2 October 1972; *Christchurch Star*, 2 October 1972.

performing with a number of short-term local and guest conductors which included amongst others Dobbs Franks, Alex Lindsay, Juan Matteucci and Ritchie.

Following a recruitment process where advertisements were placed in England and Australia as well as New Zealand, Vanco Cavdarski was duly appointed but not without some discord. Disagreements between various members of the board had been ongoing for some time which had resulted in two factions. Ritchie 'couldn't stand the bloody civilians telling us [...] their visions for the orchestra,' believing that decisions for musical organisations should be made by those who knew the music business, not businessmen without any musical knowledge or interest. He particularly disliked member and orthodontist Roger Monk for two reasons: 'because he rubbed me up the wrong way' and 'because I got so furious with him I used to call him "toothy" – he hated that.' In a nutshell Ritchie considered Monk a know-all. Additionally, Ritchie was not at all happy with the way that Cavdarski had been appointed although considered that as conductor he did a 'pretty good job.' According to Ritchie, Cavdarski was installed in a house specially purchased for him in Sumner before the appointment had been officially made, in other words, 'a jack-up.'

Matters came to a head and by the end of 1972 Winston Sharp was dismissed over conflict between a number of the organisation's board members following which Ritchie, Cook, Mann, and Griffiths who was Patron of the orchestra, resigned. A rather lengthy, anonymous article entitled 'Orchestral Troubles' published in the local paper *Riccarton News* outlined the disagreement from Sharp's followers' perspective, much of which was centred around finances: 'Briefly, Winston was sacked because [...] he did not favour the appointment of a full time professional conductor from overseas until the finance was available for the local players themselves to become professional first'.³⁸⁵ The writer espoused the notion of continuing to use local and guest conductors while the orchestra continued to evolve as a professional body citing the brass and pipe band movement as examples of such practice in that they 'have become world leaders because they

³⁸⁵ Ritchie papers, 'Reviews and Notes on Compositions or/and Events' folder.

have established themselves on a sound financial basis'. Criticism of Cavdarski's 'moonlighting with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra' within such a short time of his tenure was also noted.

Procuring funding for the orchestra and the way in which the finances were administered seemed to lie at the heart of the problem. By this time the majority of monies were used to pay the conductor and concertmaster. Ritchie believed that there should be a strong focus on securing orchestra members as fully paid professional players. The Christchurch Civic Orchestra Foundation complete with new members and additional sub-committees continued to be unsuccessful as both a cohesive unit and in negotiating with local or national bodies for sufficient funds to reach this goal.

During this time of upheaval Ritchie was approached by Ernest Bradshaw who had the ear of the City Council and therefore 'the money' to join a small group of four or five as part of a trust which would oversee an orchestra for the City. There was frustration in certain circles at the existing body's (recently named the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra Incorporated) inability to gain traction. Ritchie agreed, feeling that in a way he 'had to help'. The existing orchestral players were all invited to perform and many, but not all, joined the new Canterbury Orchestra. Its aim was to be a fully funded professional orchestra and for a time was solvent while the Christchurch Orchestra which Ritchie referred to as 'the breakaway', struggled financially, relying mostly on its accompanying fee from the Royal Christchurch Musical Society. The two local choirs which had formerly worked side by side in mutual respect with regards to programming and performances were now also divided in their loyalties. The Royal Christchurch Musical Society contracted the Christchurch Orchestra for its subscription concerts while the Christchurch Harmonic Choir aligned and performed with the Canterbury Orchestra. The combination of the choral division and the history of discord amongst the administration reinforced the split between personnel and funding

opportunities and in doing so, weakened the ability of all to work together to establish a professional orchestra in the City for some years.³⁸⁶

1974 was memorable for the Commonwealth Games held in Christchurch from 24 January to 2 February. As Director of Music for the Games, Ritchie had spent much of his time the previous two years in organisation, and arranging and composing some of the music for the event. He regularly attended associated meetings and liaised with other committee members including Chair of the Organising Committee, Ron Scott. Scott was later knighted due, in part, to the success of the event while others, Ritchie included, received awards for their voluntary service.

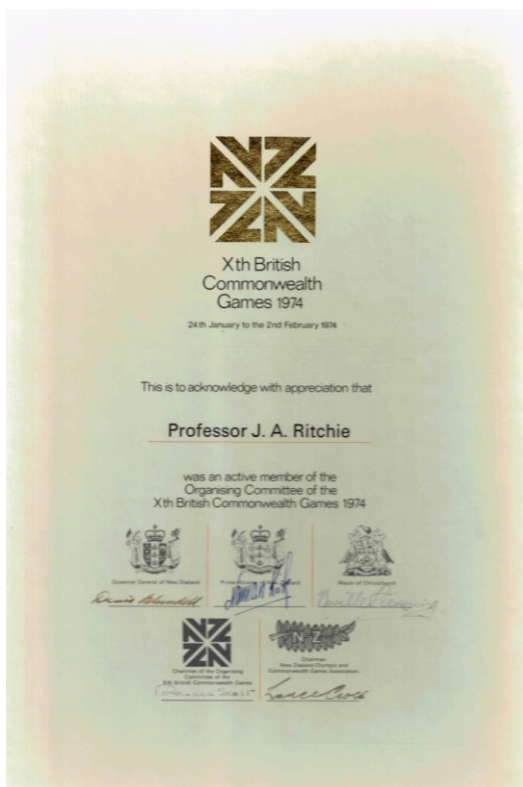


Figure 67: Award acknowledging Ritchie's contribution to the 1974 Commonwealth Games. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

³⁸⁶ Dissension continued but eventually the Christchurch Orchestra managed to win the people over and the Canterbury Orchestra was wound up within a few years. Rogers and Tipping's *Classical Sparks* outlines the machinations, and provides dates and details relating to the various factions. Tom Rogers and Simon Tipping, *Classical Sparks: The Story of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra* (Wellington: Dunmore Publishing, 2008).

It was a huge undertaking which required the involvement of many and varied musicians; for instance Oswald Cheesman was commissioned to score a medley of the thirty-five or so national anthems which were played by two alternating brass bands – the New Zealand Army Band and the National Band – as the teams entered for the Opening Ceremony. As well, the Caledonian Highland Pipe Band, the Scottish Society of New Zealand Pipe Band, hundreds of choristers from the Royal Christchurch Musical Society and the Christchurch Harmonic Society, and around two and a half thousand school children participated while Maori singing and poi dances were performed by a four-hundred strong contingency.

Additionally, a band was stationed to perform the medal ceremony at each of the nine to ten venues to perform the victory anthem all of which had been arranged specially for this purpose by Corporal Roger Carter of the army band. Aside from overseeing the organisational and logistical aspects of the music within the event, Ritchie also composed four fanfares, a choral work with military band, *Fairest Earth*, to text by A.R.D. Fairburn, and *Girls and Boys – Fantasy* for military brass band which accompanied the two thousand five hundred school children while they performed the ‘surprise’ item at the Opening Ceremony; wearing red, white and blue rain coats they formed the NZ74 symbol in the centre of the arena.

Chapter 7: Composer in the Community

Well that's one thing you've got to know about me. I was totally solitary as a composer. As a composer, I didn't want to know all about anyone else's composing. I just got on with it and other composers' opinions – I couldn't care less.³⁸⁷
John Ritchie, 2010.

It was the opportunity to compose which Ritchie had most missed and missed out on during his time in the armed services. He knew that he was not alone in feeling adrift from his pre-war life and had in fact fared better than many so he was careful not to talk about it much to others. Aided by his enduring Christian faith, he was usually able to put aside any thoughts which dwelt on the past to focus on the present and future. Nonetheless, a residual irritation at this loss remained with him throughout his life which he revealed during a brief unguarded moment while he chatted one day to the author. This disclosure extended to grumbling about those whose privileged backgrounds provided them with the means to concentrate solely on composing. In this he mentioned Lilburn. Not only was Lilburn free from financial worries, Ritchie believed, circumstances with regards to national service were also in his favour. As Norman's volume elucidates, Lilburn duly responded to two call-ups; firstly in London in 1940 when he was informed he was exempt as a New Zealand student, and again following his return to New Zealand in 1941 where he failed his medical due to poor eyesight. Ritchie's knowledge may not have extended to the specifics of the interim payment of a thousand pounds from the Lilburn family estate which is referred to in Norman's book but he was aware that Lilburn had spent a number of years seemingly without steady employment while he concentrated on his music.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁷ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 3 May 2010.

³⁸⁸ Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 148.

1946-1948 – Junior Lecturer

Composing was never far from Ritchie's mind and although he was determined to pursue this, time constraints and adapting to his new life impaired his ability to concentrate on this for any significant time during his first years at Canterbury University as junior lecturer. Occasionally he was able to closet himself away and pen notes to manuscript. It was perhaps not as easy or as rewarding as having extended periods alone in which to concentrate fully on a work, however he persevered and produced some small pieces at this time. Mirroring his early endeavours, he completed one song for soprano and piano, one for tenor and piano and one for soprano or tenor and piano in February, September and October 1946 respectively and two songs for male voices in 1947.

A few of these works were later published, once more with Vernon Griffiths as protagonist, notably Ritchie's arrangement of Shakespeare's *Under the Greenwood Tree* from the play *As You Like It* composed in October 1946 for soprano or tenor and piano was published by Augener Ltd., London in 1951. In 1948 Ritchie sought permission from publishers Macmillan & Co., for the use of the text from the other two songs, *Frolic* and *Et Sunt Commercica Coeli* which were from the *Golden Treasury of Modern Lyrics*. Permission was granted for a fee of two guineas and the guarantee of an acknowledgement. A further Shakespearean text, 'Full Fathom Five' from *The Tempest* for tenor, baritone and bass was completed in September 1947 and was the sole original composition in the 1955 Novello publication 'Twelve Three-Part Songs composed and arranged by Vernon Griffiths and John Ritchie for Male Voices of Limited Range'.

Ritchie was one of thirty composers at the time included in *Augener's Modern Songs A to Z* listing on the published score. The composers were predominantly British-born men although there were a small number of songs attributed to women. As well as New Zealand, composers originated from Switzerland, Chile, Australia and Russia most of whom had either settled in the United Kingdom in adulthood or spent a period of time studying there before having their works accepted by Augener. John Ireland, Edmund Rubbra, J.A. Westrup and Victor Babin were some of the more well-known composers represented. Ritchie aside,

the majority had been born before or around the turn of the twentieth century. Two songs by Griffiths were also listed and published in 1951 which leads one to assume that Griffiths was continuing to support and aid Ritchie in his musical career.

Ritchie's strength in directing musical groups such as the Addington Workshops Choir which excelled to such a degree under the most unlikely circumstances was due in part to a learnt skill from his mentor. Griffiths had undoubtedly demonstrated in practice how to get the best from performers by presenting them with his musical arrangements which fell within the individual's or group's capabilities; however without the intelligence and innate musicality which Ritchie possessed, it would have been very difficult to transfer such skills to the varying groups of singers and instrumentalists which Ritchie both composed for and directed throughout his life. It was a skill which served him well as a composer but it may also have inhibited his writing style. He strongly believed that there was little point in writing music which would never be heard and that it was the sign of a good composer when a work was challenging but not beyond the performers' ability. Additionally, Ritchie was unlikely to compose simply because he felt compelled to do so due to time constraints, particularly at this early stage of his academic career.

1948 was a rather more productive year for Ritchie's composing endeavours. This was probably due to a combination of a more settled home and work life and a wider engagement with musical activities in Canterbury. Anita Ritchie too contributed to his success; she enjoyed a return to singing and the performance opportunities which developed and, just as he had done in their school days, Ritchie delighted in composing for her. *Prayer for Poverty*, and an arrangement of the folk song *Greensleeves* were performed by Anita to the accompaniment of Griffiths at a welcome function in honour of the new Rector Dr H. R. Hulme on 16 November. Ritchie's setting of the A. E. Housman poem *When I was in love with you* (November 1948) was later grouped with *Stars, I Have Seen Them Fall* (April 1949) and *When I was Young and Twenty* (April 1950) to form *Three Housman Lyrics*.

Choral music was also written for particular groups; *O Mistress Mine* (Shakespeare), an unaccompanied SATB work was composed for G E Wilkinson and the Dunedin Training Choir (May, 1948), and *Omnes Gentes Plaudite* (Psalm 47) for the local Christchurch Cathedral Choir directed by C. Foster Browne (October). A letter from A. D. Hewson, secretary of the Christchurch Diocesan Choral Association to Ritchie dated 17 December 1948 outlined plans for this work to feature in the choir's performance at the Festival the following year together with a request for a minimum of three hundred copies, the cost of which was to be charged to the Association. In November of the same year Ritchie also received a formal request from the Christchurch Civic Music Council to compose a short cantata for the combined choirs of the Country Towns' Festival 1950 centennial with the proviso 'that the cantata submitted is deemed by the Music Committee to be worthy of acceptance for the occasion.' History shows that this was indeed the case with its timely completion and first performance on 21 September 1950.

A number of male voice works were produced, most of which were performed by the Addington Workshops Choir; *Fear no More the Heat of the Sun* (January, 1948), and arrangements of *What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor*, *Drink to me Only, Tell me*, and *Where is Fancy Bred* for Jack Jennings, a colleague in the Psychology Department at the university, who was leaving to head an Industrial and Organisational Psychology Unit at the Department of Labour. While Ritchie had not as yet begun composing the chamber or string music which was to feature in his more prolific and creative composing years, he was able to use these vocal works to maintain and further extend his skills as a composer and to begin to develop a unique and recognizable style of composition.

Ritchie's pursuit of composing extended to submitting an entry for the Philip Neill Memorial Prize. His piano duo *Passacaglia and Fugue on an Original Theme* was one of nine submissions for the competition in 1948 which were assessed by the examiners Victor Galway (Blair Professor of Music) and Vernon Griffiths. Ritchie – along with the other eight entrants it is to be assumed – received notification of the results in a letter dated 22 July from the University of Otago

Registrar, H. Chapman. Of the entries, the examiners expressed that the standard was very high and that a clear winner was unable to be decided upon. Acting on their recommendation, the university council agreed that an equal amount of fifteen pounds prize money be awarded to joint winners D.A Byars (Donald Alexander) and J.A. Ritchie.³⁸⁹ In addition, two further entrants, J.V. Peters and C.L. Martin received three pounds three shillings each as a special prize if they agreed to their compositions also being retained at the University Library. Both winning entries were later recorded and broadcast via 4YA by Professors Vernon Griffiths and Victor Galway. A reviewer following the airing noted the inevitability that comparisons would be made of the two works and concluded that both were of equal merit in musical ability. The writer concluded however that there is more to composing than an excellent and well taught technique – ‘the production of the raw material of the composer’s art, his ideas, themes, inspirations’. Their view was that Ritchie’s work surpassed Byars in this crucial area of originality: ‘the delightful and breezy theme [...] was evidently the composer’s own’.

With such acclamation given by his peers, it might have been expected that Ritchie would extend his piano repertoire following the success of this work but the number of compositions for the instrument is relatively small. Indeed, he never felt particularly comfortable writing for the piano, a fact which he attributed to his lack of training in the instrument. It was a source of loss and regret for him that his circumstances had deprived him of the opportunity to pursue piano lessons during his childhood. Ritchie believed that this was an impediment to successful piano writing and certainly his self-doubt around his competency as a composer of the instrument influenced his output.

That same year there is also some evidence that Ritchie was considering applying for a Doctorate in Music such as Griffiths had completed some years earlier. A

³⁸⁹ ‘Byers, Donald Alexander: Songs of travel [for voice with piano], words by R. L. Stevenson’, *Alexander Turnbull Library: National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa* <<https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.14654>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

letter dated 8 October from the University Registry, Oxford, opens with ‘In response to your letter’ and continues on with reference to an enclosure of ‘the only available set of papers set at Music Examinations’ along with a copy of the Statute. The writer informs Ritchie that the Examination must be passed before a composition is submitted by a D.Mus candidate. There is no further correspondence on the matter and although it is possible that the information was requested on behalf of a student it is more likely that, buoyed by his success with the Philip Neill Memorial Prize, Ritchie was keen to gain the qualification for himself.

1949-1952 – Lecturer

A rendition of Frances Chesterton’s *How Far is it to Bethlehem?* for treble voices and piano which Ritchie composed in 1950 was included in the Blandford Press *Second Treasury of Christmas Music* in 1967. The volume held a combination of traditional and contemporary songs; amongst the latter were works of two other New Zealand composers, Dorothy Freed (1919-2000) and David Farquhar (1928-2007). Several of Ritchie’s folk song arrangements composed in 1954 were later published by Novello and noted thus: ‘Six Folk-Songs arr. John Ritchie [...]. Here is yet another collection which must certainly be looked at’.³⁹⁰ Ritchie also composed music for plays: *Why Should There Be Two?* for Christopher Fry’s *The Firstborn* and three songs for *Alice in Wonderland*.

As Ritchie’s output changed, the opportunities for his works to be performed increased as did his conducting roles. He was now established at the university and had become widely known around Canterbury and further afield in the South Island. Musical groups, particularly choirs, were aplenty and the public were keen to attend performances and functions where music was offered. His name featured in programmes and concert reviews as a conductor and composer and the ubiquitous ‘J. A. R.’ appeared on reviews of both recitals and books. His works were included in several programmes. On 15 August 1949 at Canterbury

³⁹⁰ Ritchie papers; *Music in Education*, March/April 1959.

University College the Choral Society Concert opened with *The Donkey* which had been written for the group followed by *O Mistress Mine* composed the previous year for the Dunedin Training College Choir. Later that year the Christchurch Cultural Society presented a group of soloists singing works by Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, Schubert, Mendelssohn and William Boyce together with a set of three songs each of Wainwright Morgan and John Ritchie. Guest soprano Anita Ritchie sang the New Zealand offerings including Ritchie's *Under the Greenwood Tree*, *Prayer for Poverty* and *When I was in Love with you*. These were later presented at a recital dedicated to original compositions and arrangements at the university. As well as the Ritchie works, Anita sang a group of songs by Griffiths while Clare Peach performed her own two choral preludes on piano.

In June 1950 Ritchie scored his two piano Philip Neill prize winning work *Passacaglia and Fugue* for Piano and String Orchestra, and dedicated it to Frank and Kathleen Callaway. It was performed by the King Edward Technical College Symphony Orchestra on 13 June 1950 with Frank Callaway conducting and Kathleen Callaway on piano. It was one of two New Zealand works in a predominantly English programme of music from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. The second New Zealand piece, *Elegy for Viola and Orchestra*, was penned by Allan McDermott, one of the orchestra's violin players.

Both *The Evening Star* and the *Otago Daily Times* printed reviews of the concert and were in accord as to the excellent playing of the orchestra and the direction of Frank Callaway. The *Otago Daily Times* suggested that 'the ensemble ranks with the Choral Society and the University Trio' as a major musical body which attains a high musical standard. In reporting on the programme, the *Evening Standard's* reviewer considered Callaway 'modest' in his selection but noted the inclusion of two local composers' works. McDermott's piece received praise for its scoring with an effective solo melodic line against the rich harmonies of the muted strings although the *Otago Daily Times* opined that it might be 'a little monotonous' in texture. Ritchie's work was also well received and noteworthy for its originality in

particular, although the *Star* considered the Fugue was ‘marked by grandeur rather than exciting intricacy’.

Ritchie composed several other solo songs and choral works during this period of which a larger percentage were for male voice choir, a reflection of his involvement with the Addington Workshops Choir which had amassed an excellent reputation and whose concerts were well attended and reviewed. His most notable achievement at this time, however, was the spring cantata *Then Laugheth the Year*. Commissioned by the Centennial Music Committee, the work was unanimously adopted for the Provincial Towns’ Music Festival at a Christchurch Civic Music Council meeting in early 1950. Such was the local interest in the work that its completion was reported in the *Press*. This was followed a short time later by an article which outlined the scoring of the work, and informed the readers of the author and titles of each of the verses. One of the adjudicators on the panel of the submitted works was also quoted: ‘The touches of modernity are effective and natural [...], spontaneous in style and expression [...] [and the] ideas are fresh and well constructed’.

The Provincial Towns Festival took place from 21 to 23 September and was part of the programme for the Canterbury Centennial Celebrations in 1950. Running for a full calendar year from August 1950 to July 1951 the celebrations consisted of family entertainment, sporting and musical events, art exhibitions, ballet and theatre. The cantata premiered in the second half of the official opening of the festival on 21 September by the Combined Country Choirs comprising the Ellesmere Musical Society, the Oxford Choral Society, and the Rangiora Musical Society, together with the South Brighton Choral Society. The work was accompanied by Alison Edgar and Dale Mancer, and conducted by the composer.

Although the work was originally scored for soprano, contralto, tenor and bass with two pianos and string orchestra, it was, perhaps disappointingly, performed without the strings as it was deemed too difficult to amass the large number of players required and arrange the necessary rehearsal times with the singers. Notwithstanding, the recital received a highly complimentary review for the

performance, conducting and its composition by C.F.B. who noted that it was ‘excellently written’ and ‘the spirit of the words has been most aptly captured [...]’. The harmonic and rhythmic variety in the writing makes it a work that is interesting from start to finish’. He added that he hoped that the work could be heard several more times preferably as scored, noting that this might be possible when the National Orchestra was in the city. Additional accolades were written about both Ritchie’s conducting and the composition: ‘Mr Ritchie conducted the massed choirs with marked ability’, and ‘The cantata [...] music by the brilliant Christchurch musician John Ritchie, was a delightful work [...] [with] a joyous element, a lilting rhythm, a delicate unity, and a harmonious fusing of word and music’.³⁹¹

Four days after its premiere the work received a second airing in Ashburton as part of a Centennial Choral Festival programme by the Ashburton Christian Youth Choir. A rather grand occasion, Ritchie was introduced to the audience by the Mayor of the town, Mr E. C. Bathurst, prior to the work begin played just after the interval. Further performances of the work followed; the Ellesmere Musical Society on 5 October at the Leeston Town Hall, and at a new instrument fundraiser concert by the Invercargill Junior Symphony Orchestra, a group of forty-nine players together with The Southern Singers, a small choral group formed in 1949 for the purpose of providing programmes for radio broadcast, performed it to an enthusiastic audience.

Both orchestra and choir were commended following their performance but most attention was given to the composition by *The Southland Times* who commented on the work’s ‘joyous spirit’ and, most noticeably, the consistently high quality throughout with the work fulfilling its promise of the opening bars. In July 1951, the Christchurch Harmonic Society produced A Choral Programme of purely twentieth-century music in which the cantata, conducted by the composer, was performed and broadcast simultaneously on radio 3YC. The New Zealand *Listener* writer ‘Westcliff’ expressed delight in the ‘vivacious and well varied’

³⁹¹ Ritchie papers, December 1949-May 1952, newspaper cuttings [n.d.].

work from this composer which, together with Ritchie's new work, *A Centennial Ode* (1951), signalled an 'unexpected talent emerging in the musical world'.³⁹² Many schools, communities and towns had their own singing and instrumental groups, and invitations to musical concerts and meetings abounded. With a propensity for the choral programmes to consist of the works of English composers, Griffiths's arrangements were also often included and, increasingly Ritchie's works, too, were featured. A review by C.H.D. of the Christchurch Boys' High School concert of 28 July 1951 made particular mention of Ritchie's 'splendid arrangement of *I Know Where I'm Going*'.

In April of the same year, the recently formed Christchurch Chamber Music Society hosted the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra's first concert of the season at the Radiant Theatre. A young ensemble of only two years, its founder Alex Lindsay (1919-1974) was committed to promoting the works of New Zealand composers. An experienced and highly accomplished violinist from Invercargill, he had returned to New Zealand from nearly a decade training and playing in London to audition for the newly established National Orchestra. Dissatisfied with the standards, he set about forming his own orchestra which, by 1950, had become widely known and esteemed throughout the country. Lindsay was astute in his programming with a mix of traditional and contemporary music. The first half and opening second half work of this programme featured the repertoire of Handel, Corelli, Vivaldi and Mozart which was then followed by the contemporary voices of British composers, Walton and Britten, alongside New Zealander Larry Pruden (1923-1982).

As a contemporary of Ritchie, Pruden was one of a small number of composers who were active in New Zealand at the time and whose work was respected amongst other musicians. Ritchie was amongst this group and spoke warmly of Pruden to the researcher and correspondence between the two reflects this.

³⁹² *Listener*, 10 August 1950.

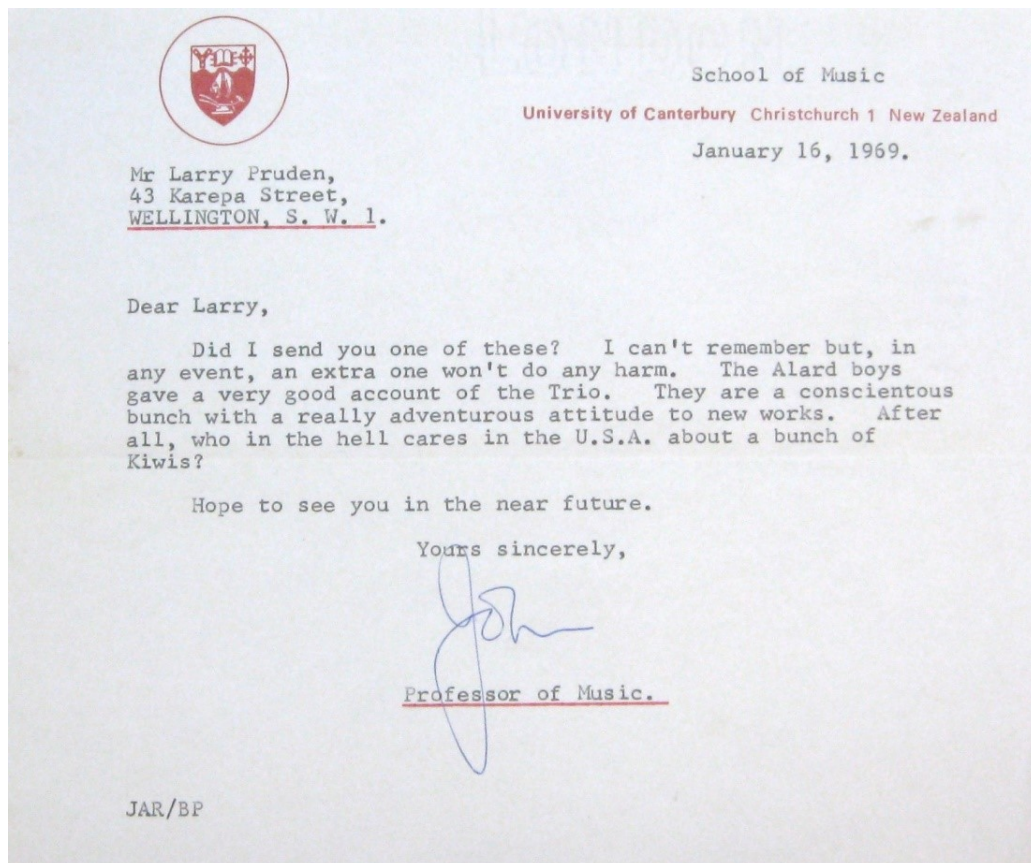


Figure 68: Copy of letter from John Ritchie to Larry Pruden. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The inclusion of original music from a young New Zealand composer in such a programme augured well for other new works to be heard. Ritchie's output was increasing and although he initially concentrated on composing for voice, the cantata was a much more extensive work both vocally and for its scoring for two pianos and string orchestra.

Composers whom Ritchie considered peers during his early professional life included Ronald Tremain, Edwin Carr, the slightly younger David Farquhar and the somewhat older Douglas Lilburn. Ritchie was not a particular admirer of Lilburn's works, and their respective lifestyles, friendships and working arenas meant that their paths seldom crossed. As previously stated, Ritchie expressed some residual resentment for the disruption to his life as a serviceman during the Second World War while others such as Lilburn were exempt, although his antipathy for Lilburn's work at the time is explained as simply a difference of

opinion of music and composition. While Lilburn is celebrated as ‘the father of New Zealand music’ (see note 22) and was well-regarded in many circles, he was, to the recently returned serviceman Ritchie, at six years his senior, a somewhat distant figure who had already begun his musical journey – and one which did not coincide with Ritchie’s in any particular way. Additionally, Ritchie’s differing family circumstances meant that his need for regular income superseded any personal creative drive. There can only be conjecture as to whether Ritchie’s compositional output would have changed stylistically under different circumstances, for instance without financial pressure and time constraints. As previously stated he was introduced to serialism during his visit to the United States of America in 1956 to 1957 and composed a work using the techniques he had been shown. On completion of the piece, he considered it to be the antithesis of how music should be constructed and required little if any real personal input. He believed that the work was not a true reflection of himself as a composer and destroyed it to ensure that it could never be associated with his musical output.³⁹³

At the time that Ritchie was developing his style and broadening his composing range with *Then Laugheth the Year*, Lilburn was already an established composer whose works were being performed regularly in New Zealand and being heard further afield – although second performances of new works were rare. It was also the year that Lilburn moved permanently to Wellington as full-time lecturer at Victoria University, a shift which Norman notes ‘marked the end of his prolific period as a freelance composer’.³⁹⁴ Lilburn’s works were seldom heard in Christchurch due in part it would seem to Griffiths’s refusal to include them in the Canterbury University College Music Department concerts.³⁹⁵ Griffiths’s feelings that New Zealand composers of a certain (English) style were ignored were made known in a letter to the editor on 23 December 1951:

³⁹³ John Ritchie in discussion with author although it is not known if he thought this at the time or later. Ritchie did not say when he destroyed it.

³⁹⁴ Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 154.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

To correct any erroneous impression which the first paragraph of your London correspondent's communication, "N.Z. Composer in Britain," might convey, I mention the following facts: music by New Zealand composers not mentioned in that paragraph has been published in Britain by Edward Arnold, Augener, Ltd., Banks Faith Press, T. Nelson and Sons, Novello, Oxford University Press, and Year Book Press. In one case, at least, approximately ten thousand copies of a composer's works have been sold in Britain in the last two years. New Zealand musicians have won prizes for composition in Britain against keen competition. New Zealand is not a "one-composer" country. Informed musicians overseas are aware of that fact.³⁹⁶

Visiting musicians to the city, however, were not loathe to perform Lilburn's compositions and on 15 August the Christchurch Chamber Music Society presented the Musica Viva Chamber Players from Sydney and provided audiences with the premiere performance of his String Quartet in E Minor at the Radiant Theatre.³⁹⁷ The work which had been languishing since 1946 received mixed reviews although perhaps not surprisingly the most critical comments originated from C.F.B. in the *Christchurch Press*.³⁹⁸ Griffiths may have been determined to ignore Lilburn's compositions due to strong differing tastes but Ritchie took some interest in Lilburn's composing life as indicated by the programme retained in his scrapbook; it is assumed that he attended the recital in any event.³⁹⁹ Unlike performances which pertained to Griffiths and the University, and in particular Anita's and his own performances, this interest did not extend to others' opinion of the work as no reviews were found attached to or near the programme. Reviews which related to performances of groups which he had a personal association with such as the Dunedin Technical College concerts appear to have been kept.

Ritchie's output continued to flourish during this period until his promotion to Professor of Music in 1962, and his compositions were performed regularly in local recitals. There was a particular compositional emphasis on vocal works and

³⁹⁶ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook December 1949-May 1952.

³⁹⁷ Named Musica Viva Quartet in Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 142.

³⁹⁸ Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 142.

³⁹⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook December 1949-May 1952.

string orchestra which was in direct correlation to his involvement with various music groups at the time. The total number of individual solo songs now numbered twenty-three with a similar number each of male voice and choral works. He followed the cantata with the previously mentioned *A Centennial Ode*, a choral work for SATB and piano, and written for the Royal Christchurch Musical Society. It premiered at the Civic Theatre in July 1951 for the society's centennial concert to a large appreciative audience. Preceded by Quilter's *The Sailor and His Lass*, a set of Scottish and English folk songs and *Over the Hills and Far Away* (1949) by English composer Thomas Wood (1892 -1950), the work was performed in the second half of the programme. The reviewer, C.F.B., found the work to be 'profoundly moving' and opined that it was 'one of the best things to have come out of our recent celebrations'.

From 26 July to 13 August the Music Department hosted a series of four concerts of 'Recitals of British Song by Hubert Milverton-Carta' with accompaniment by Douglas Zanders, the first of which was a repeat of a Milverton-Carta performance at Auckland University College the previous week on 21 July. While the programmes featured songs of well-known composers including Purcell, Britten, Ireland, and Butterworth, a few of Griffiths's arrangements and a similar number of Ritchie's songs were also performed. These included *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Frolic* in the first and third concert while *Devotion*, *When I was in Love with You* and *Prayer for Poverty* were coupled with Griffiths's *There is a Lady Sweet and Kind* and *A Boy's Song* to form a grouping which sat alongside works by Delius, Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Grainger, Britten and others in the fourth and final concert. Subsequent reviews of the music naturally focussed on the major works in each recital; however it was also declared that the inherent quality of the New Zealand works justified their inclusion in the programmes.

Sacred music also featured in Ritchie's output. Neither of his parents had attended church during his childhood; in fact his father was an atheist. Anita and John Ritchie's early church choir singing mentioned previously was as much for musical reasons as religious although both were spiritually minded and agreed

together to become Anglicans in their youth, worshipping thus during their early married life. Writing music for the church was not considered unusual for a composer and Ritchie composed for both the Christchurch Anglican and Catholic choirs as well as using religious text for secular choirs.

In 1951 the organist and director of the Christchurch Cathedral choir, Charles Foster Browne, organised and directed a four-concert programme of New Zealand church music which was broadcast by 3YC over a month from mid-August. The first two performances comprised solely of works by Victor Galway and Vernon Griffiths respectively. Griffiths was described in the *Listener* on 10 August 1951 as a ‘distinguished composer’ although his works are seldom heard or mentioned in New Zealand composition discussions today. The third programme, however, included four works which were considered to be of particular note because they had all been specially written for the Cathedral Thanksgiving Service during the Canterbury Centenary. These were Ritchie’s *O Clap Your Hands Together*, *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis* by Douglas Lilburn, T. A. Moresby’s *From Glory to Glory* and Jack Peters’s *Benedictus*.

There were few programmes at that time which contained only New Zealand works and even fewer where a Ritchie and Lilburn composition sat side by side. While Ritchie’s métier was composing for voice, Lilburn wrote few choral works and intriguingly the work’s origin was much earlier than the stated centenary year. Originally entitled *Evening Service*, the work was composed for C. Foster Browne and the Cathedral Choir in 1942.⁴⁰⁰ Also rather curiously, Ritchie’s work is not included in his composition book at this date; however *O, Clap Your Hands* for unison and two-part treble choir, orchestra and fanfare group is listed as being composed in June 1989 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Primary Schools Music Festival Association. It is likely that the work was first composed in 1950 as indicated and then revised for another purpose in 1989. Lilburn may have also revised his work for the Centenary although there is no supporting evidence of this. The *Listener* was quite probably simply reporting on information received

⁴⁰⁰ Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 103.

from the musical director; as Ritchie was fond of quoting: ‘Never let the truth get in the way of a good story’.

By 1952 Ritchie’s commitments increased meaning that he was spending less time with his family and that time for composing was also constrained by a range of other musical commitments. Notwithstanding, he continued to arrange and compose for voice in particular, and his *Passacaglia for Piano and Strings* and a two-part song were selected to be performed at the New Zealand Composers’ Festival in September. This event was promoted as ‘Music by Dominion Composers’ with fifteen composers from Auckland to Dunedin being represented and although this was the case, a large percentage of these were from the local region. Composers included Anne Darwin, Alison Edgar, Vernon Griffiths, Ernest Jenner, Clare Peach, Robert E. Perks, John Ritchie, Alfred Worsley (Christchurch), Victor Galway, Allan McDermott (Dunedin), John Longmire, Tracey Moresby (Auckland), Jack V. Peters (England), F. Wentworth Slater (Wanganui) and Terence Vaughan (Wellington, and a graduate of Canterbury).

The concert took place in the Christchurch Civic Theatre to a very attentive and appreciative audience with 3YC the local radio station in attendance for live broadcasting. Necessarily of a rather long duration, the highlights were the two larger works of Griffiths and Jenner. *Peace and War* which Griffiths had composed for the Anzac Day service earlier in the year, was performed by the Woolston Brass Band and the Royal Christchurch Musical Society, under the direction of Field-Dodgson. The work was described as having a secure harmonic foundation but with ‘finely-poised imaginative qualities’. Of particular significance for the purposes of this study is that many years later, Ritchie too composed a work for the Woolston Brass to perform on Anzac Day in 2006.⁴⁰¹

Ritchie conducted the Christchurch Liederkränzchen as they performed Jenner’s work *La Belle Dame* while the composer provided the accompaniment. Keith Newson and the Christchurch Chamber Music Players led by Lesley Anderson

⁴⁰¹ *Gallipoli Voices* was performed by Woolston Brass on 25 April 2006.

opened the concert with Ritchie's *Passacaglia and Fugue* and although it may not have been considered as important as the two larger works, its prominence in the programme likely assured its place in the minds of those attending. The reviewer later described it as 'a merry little work [...], [its] theme reminiscent of folk'. Two songs of Ritchie's *My Heart Leaps Up* and *Descend, Ye Nine* were also performed by the Orpheus Choir and the Addington Workshops Male Voice Choir respectively. These were not specifically mentioned in the review; however a letter of thanks to Ritchie from the secretary, Mr L. F. Le Berry on behalf of the Christchurch Civic Music Council expressed appreciation for Ritchie's 'musicianly co-operation with the council' and noted that his three works performed and his directorship showed a wide range and excellent musicianship.

Other accolades were received; Frank Callaway who had listened to the recital from his home in Dunedin wrote to Ritchie expressing his enjoyment of the concert noting: 'Your men are singing well and so are your women' and Ernest Jenner was most appreciative of Ritchie's work with the *Liederkränzchen*. Victor Peters too credited Ritchie with the quality of both the Workshops choir and the *Liederkränzchen*'s performance of the Jenner work. Describing the singing for *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* as 'polished and the tone pure', he ended his congratulatory letter thus: 'With your ability as a composer and conductor, you have a great career ahead – you have earned it'. The first page of the November newsletter of the Christchurch Civic Music Council included a paragraph which summarised the programme and outlined the festival's performers. A statement of intention to repeat the event followed: 'The festival revealed such an astonishing amount of musical composition of high standard as to warrant the Council's making the Festival of Music by New Zealand Composers an annual fixture'.

Several works including the *Three Housman Lyrics* were also published either at the time or within a few years of completion. Yearbook Press, London, accepted *The Lamb* (William Blake) for treble voices and piano in 1952 just two years after it was written and later, *Be Thou Her King!* (Alice E. Byrne), (1953), a unison song for the Coronation was published by L. T. Watkins in 1953.

1953-1961 – Senior Lecturer

Since Ritchie's compositions were written purposefully for specific groups, soloists or events, there was little written that was not presented at least once. This included *Deus Stetit* for SATB and organ which was performed for Evensong by the Christchurch Cathedral Choir on 19 January on the occasion of the 1954 Royal Visit. A last minute decision was made to have the work specially bound in scarlet, and it was later presented to the Queen during the special event. There was obviously something amiss with the printing process as Ritchie was somewhat alarmed during the evening to see that the Queen's white gloves were tinged with red as she put down the score.⁴⁰²

This period marked a move towards a wider range of compositions such as string orchestra and chamber groups and a development of vocal works. One of Ritchie's most enduring works, *Lord, When the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace* for unaccompanied SATB was completed in July 1954 and subsequently published by Novello in 1957, and later by Price Milburn. The work has been recorded several times, firstly in 1972 by the University of Auckland Festival Choir (Kiwi – SLD-31, released later in 1998 on CD) and has been performed throughout New Zealand, Britain and America. Written originally for Peter Zwartz and the Canterbury University College Madrigal Group, the work is now available as a digital score by SOUNZ.

While Ritchie found it difficult to fit in composing around his other activities, Anita was supportive in allowing him time alone in his study and he would often work well into the night composing. In doing so he was able to work for longer periods of time and produce larger works. A major work, *Suite No. 1 for Strings* written for the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra was completed in 1956 and it received its first performance for 2YC in October of the same year. A public performance of the revised suite consisting of four movements; Allegro, Air,

⁴⁰² 'Composer Who Keeps Working', *Keeping On*, February 2009, p. 3.

Intrada and Fugue, (Ritchie had replaced the second movement 'Valsette' in 1958) in April 1959, took place with the National Orchestra conducted by John Hopkins.

It was also during this period that he composed piano music for Margaret Nielsen, in particular *Suite for Piano* (1955) and *Elegy for Piano* the following year. Ritchie was also approached by the New Zealand Broadcasting Service and various drama societies to compose the music for their productions. A total of seventeen were completed between 1949 and 1971, with the majority occurring between 1953 and 1954 (four) and 1960 to 1962 (seven). It is perhaps worth noting that the Christchurch Religious Drama Society Inc. wrote to Ritchie in July 1954 to express their thanks for the music in their production of *Murder in the Cathedral* which took place in June of that year and that a few years later in 1962 Ronald Tremain was commissioned by Radio New Zealand to compose music for the same play, although Ritchie's version was for orchestra and Tremain's woodwind and brass.

A flurry of activity over the next few years followed Ritchie's return from the States in 1957 which was conceivably related to his experiences whilst abroad. Notwithstanding that his refresher leave had been approved on a research basis, composing was still very much at the forefront of his mind. His letter requesting refresher leave was an indication of where his heart really lay: 'Above all else I hope to derive much stimulation for my own composition from a visit to a country where there is a wide range of musical activity of a high standard'. Nonetheless, Griffiths was firmly of the view that composing was not to be Ritchie's primary focus as indicated in a letter to the *Press*: 'On page 27 of your October 12 issue there is this statement "John Ritchie [...] recently left New Zealand to study composition in America. Mr Ritchie [...] has not left [...] to study composition [...]. He is visiting various musical institutions [...], meeting a number of overseas musicians, and observing certain musical activities and developments."

From 1957 to 1959 Ritchie completed over a dozen compositions including his most noted, *Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra*.

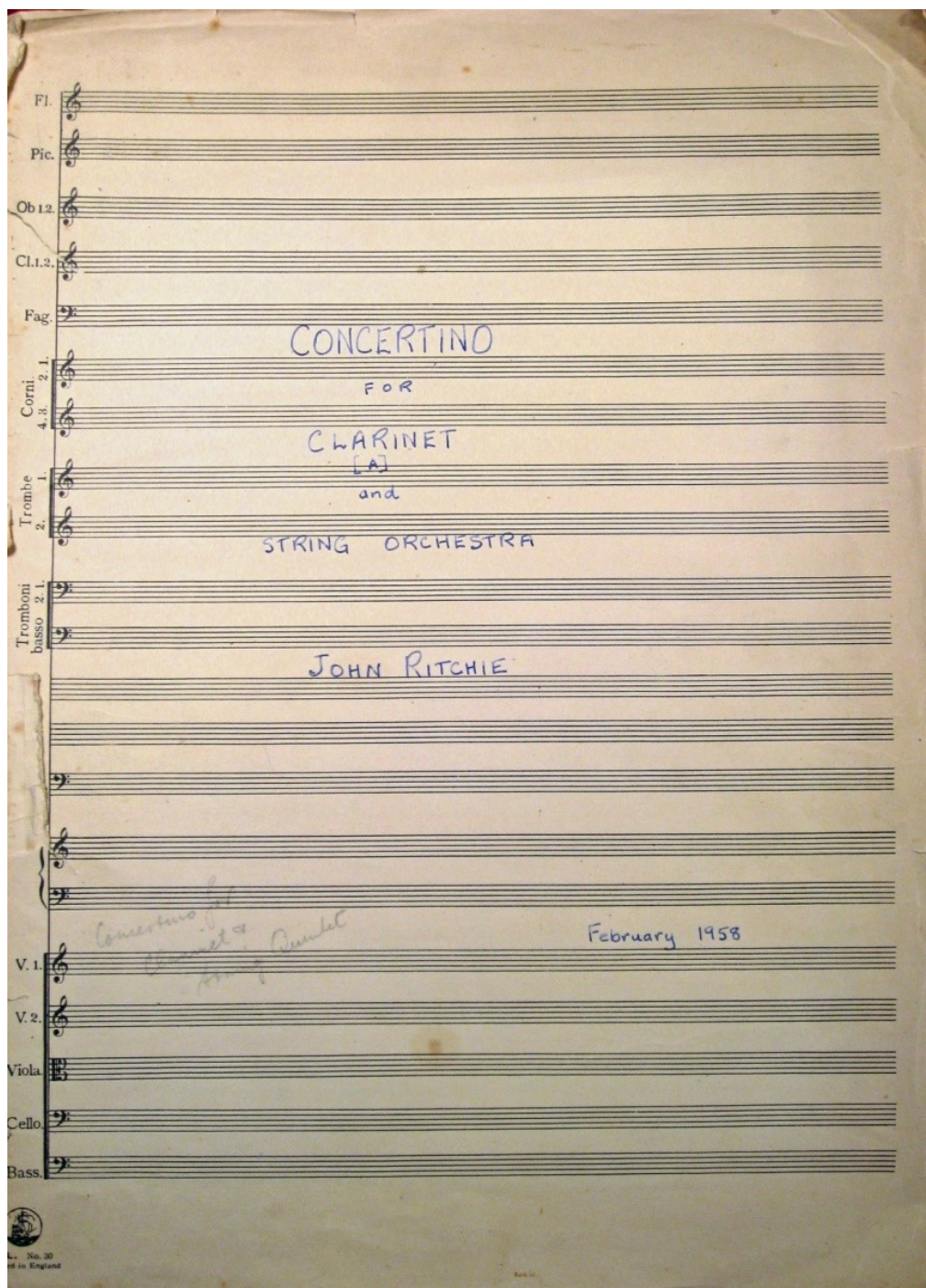


Figure 69: *Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra*, front cover of Ritchie's handwritten score, February 1958. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

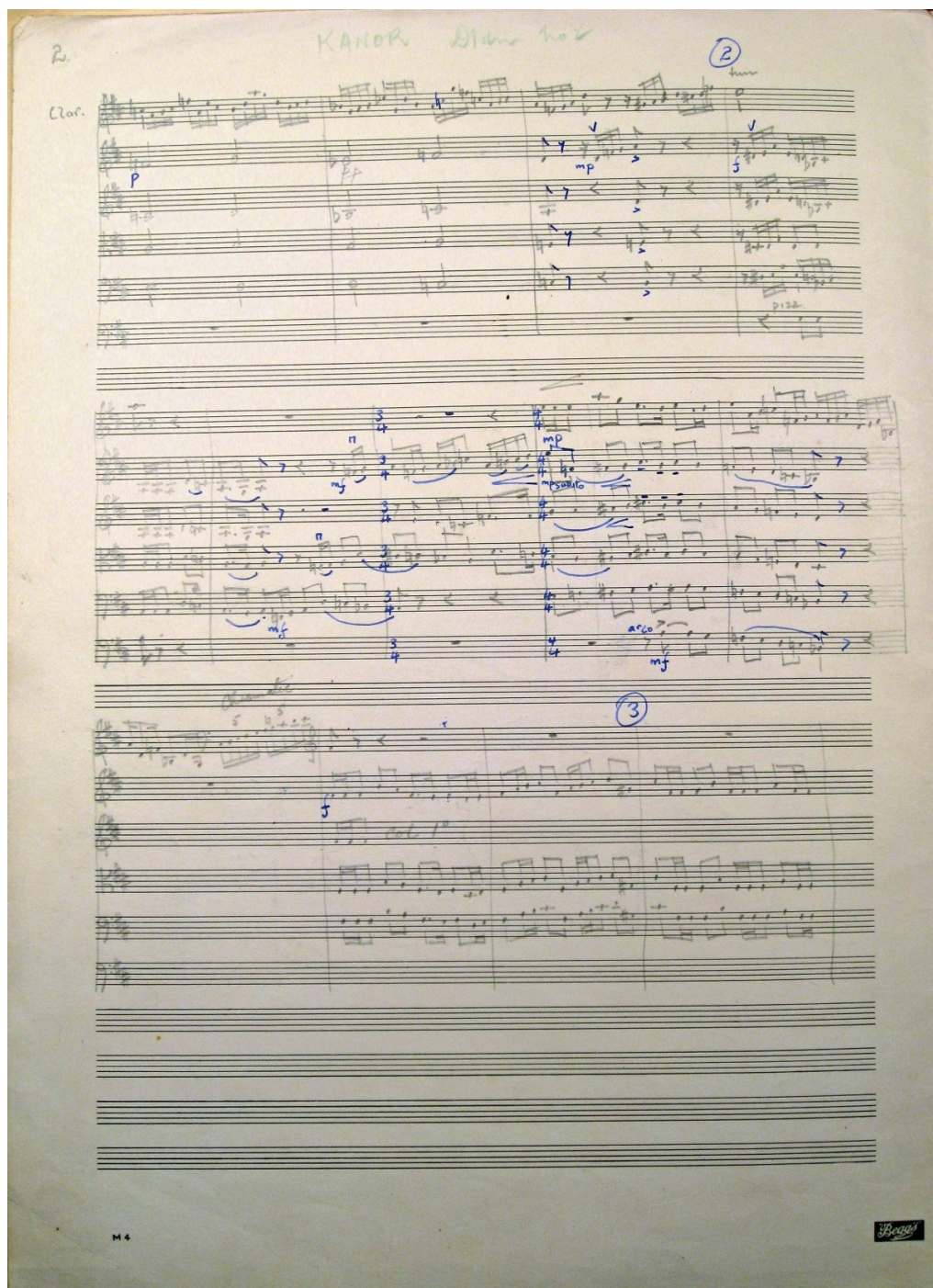


Figure 70: *Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra*, p. 2 of Ritchie's handwritten score, February 1958. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

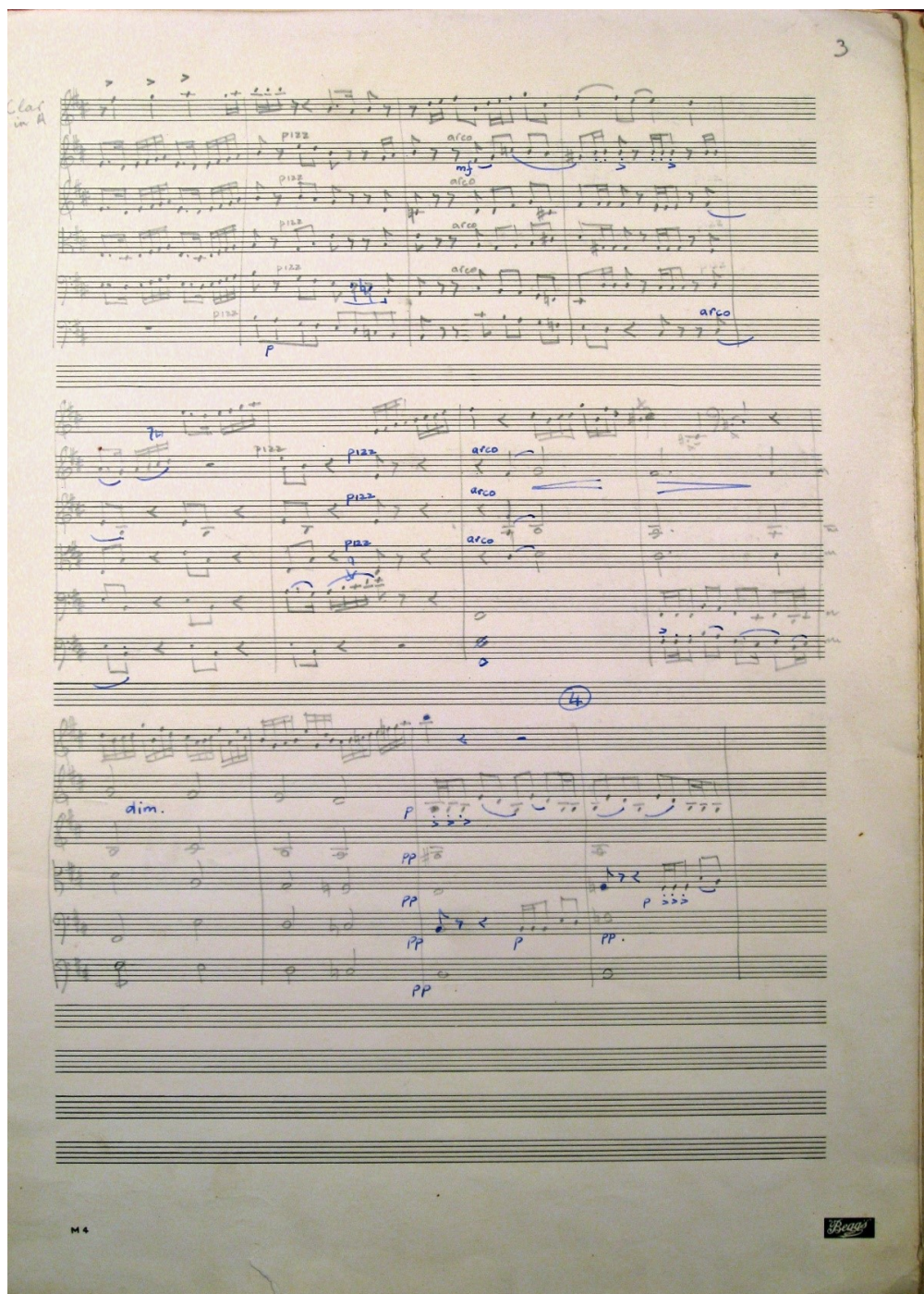


Figure 71: *Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra*, p. 3 of Ritchie's handwritten score, page 3, February 1958. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Performances of Ritchie's works occurred regularly by a variety of groups including the National Orchestra of the New Zealand Broadcasting Service which performed *Suite for Strings* (1956, later *Suite No. 1 for Strings*) at the Civic Theatre with conductor John Hopkins for their second subscription series concert on 4 April 1959. The work had previously been performed for broadcasting on

2YC by the Alex Lindsay Orchestra but this was its first public performance. The Australasian Performing and Recording Right Association (APRA) *Bulletin* Vol. 2, No. 2 of May 1961 noted the completion of Ritchie's *String Quartet* for the New Zealand String Quartet of Alex Lindsay, Ritchie Hanna, Glynne Adams and Farquhar Wilkinson, as well as incidental music for two productions by Alan de Malmanche – *Othello* (Phoenix Theatre, 1960)) and *Robin Hood* (Festival of Pines, New Plymouth, 1961). To place this in context, the publication also noted other New Zealand works as in progress or completed: *Thanksgiving Ode* by Vernon Griffiths, *A Backcountry Overture* by Larry Pruden and Douglas Lilburn's *Landfall in Unknown Seas*.

The first airing of Ritchie's *Lord, When the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace* by a large choir in Christchurch took place at the Civic Theatre on 28 October 1961 by the Royal Christchurch Musical Society as part of its second subscription concert: '[It] is a delightful atmospheric composition, admirably suited to the words of Richard Crashaw. The clever alternating use of major and minor keys, and the knowledgeable writing for the voices in a wide range of dynamics make this a worthy contribution to the contemporary choral repertoire'.⁴⁰³

Further, in December, the British Broadcasting Corporation accepted *Concertino for Clarinet and Strings* for a broadcast performance in March 1962. This was performed by soloist John McCaw who was now principal clarinet in the London Philharmonic Orchestra. It was reported in the *Press* that this work and a subsequent *Concertino for Piano and Strings* (late 1958) which was first performed in December of 1961, were intended to be the first two in a series of similar works for strings and various solo instruments.

This plan did not come to fruition and although the piano concertino was well received with its 'luscious harmonic colours and powerful dynamics [...]. The finale is a joyful tripping movement with some brilliant writing concluding a most engaging work', it did not become part of the repertoire. On the other hand, the

⁴⁰³ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1961; M. T. D., review, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

clarinet concertino is perhaps the most well-known and highly regarded work in Ritchie's output.

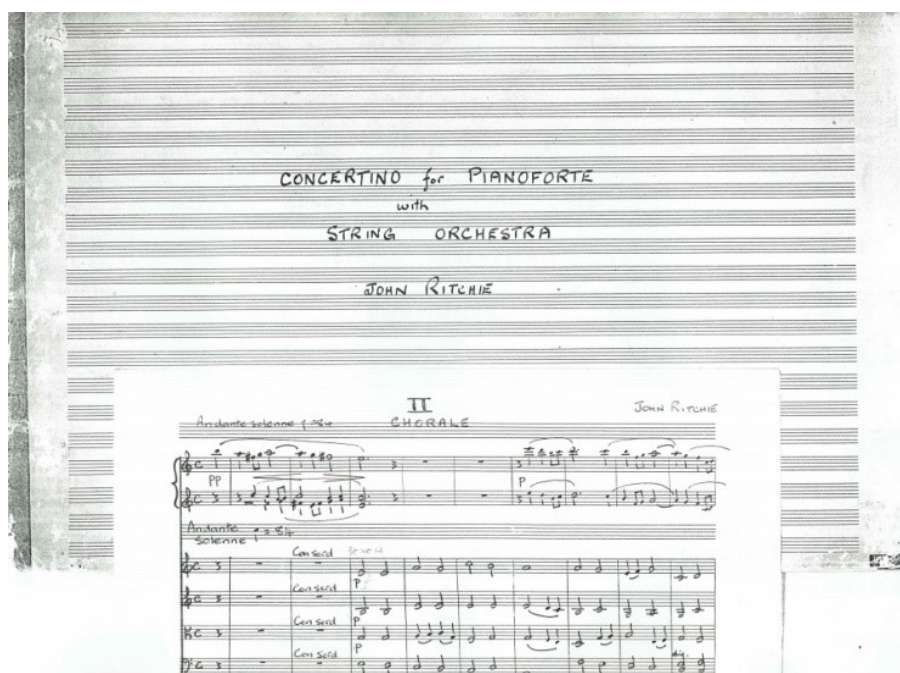


Figure 72: *Concertino for Pianoforte with String Orchestra* by John Ritchie. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

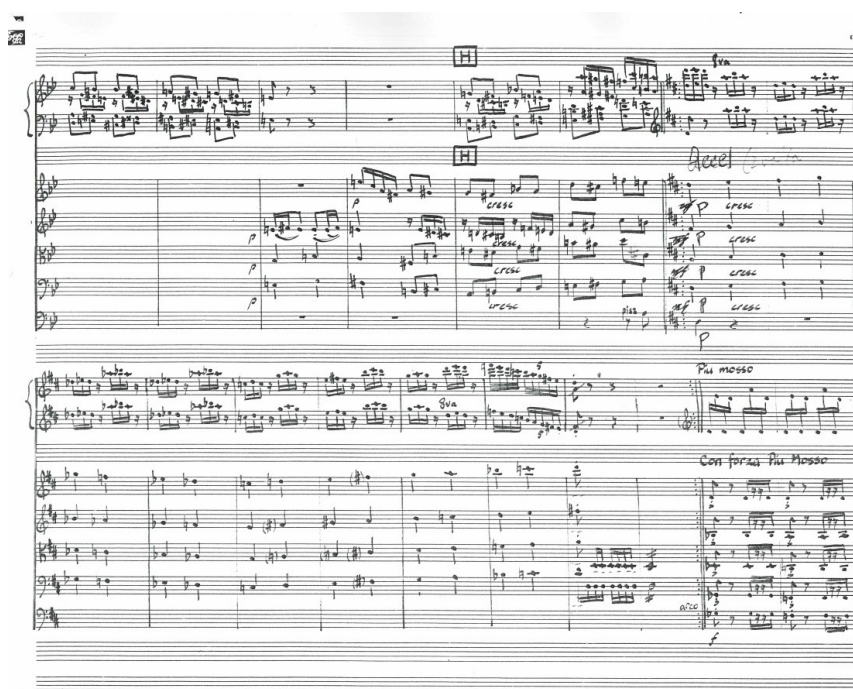


Figure 73: Page from the score of *Concertino for Pianoforte with String Orchestra* by John Ritchie. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Additionally, Ritchie composed strings and piano music for an adaptation for radio of T.S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion* by Bernard Kearns which was broadcast in August 1961, and completed sixteen arrangements for song accompaniments. These were performed by the John Ritchie String Orchestra for the final of the Mobil Songs Contest on 26 September, held for the first time in Christchurch, at the Civic Theatre.



FIVE OF THE TWELVE FINALISTS in the Mobil Song Quest, who arrived from the North Island by air yesterday. The five Aucklanders, from left, are Sally Sheppard, Lynne Cantlon, William Johnson, Patricia Price, and Hannah Tetana. The winners will be chosen at a charity concert held in the Civic Theatre tomorrow. Proceeds from the concert will go to the Blinded Ex-Servicemen's Fund.

Reasons For Entering Mobil Song Quest

Reasons why four of the five Auckland finalists entered in the 1961 Mobil Song Quest varied from "being handed an entry form," "the money," "the competitive value," and "my wife encouraged me to enter."

All the contestants were thrilled and excited at having reached the finals, to be held tomorrow night in the Civic Theatre.

Some of the contestants have been singing in competitions for the last 15 years.

Three of the twelve finalists will compete in the Gilbert and Sullivan section, which has been included this year for the first time.

Formerly the contest was confined to traditional ballads. The addition of the new section has increased the popularity of the contest.

Prize money awarded at the concert will amount to £750, with prizes of £300, £100, and £50 for the winning, second and third performances in the main contest and a special prize of £100 for the winner of the competition. All other finalists will receive £20.

Two From Christchurch

The finalists are: William Johnson (Auckland), Hazel Millar (Auckland), Noel Sigal (Wellington), Patricia Price (Auckland), Ian Morton (Auckland), Sally Sheppard (Auckland), Alastair Brown (Christchurch), Hannah Tetana (Auckland), John Poole (Palmerston North), William Thomas Williams (Christchurch), Lynne Cantlon (Auckland), William Johnson is a finalist in both the main contest and the Gilbert and Sullivan section.

The net proceeds from the concert will go to the Blinded Ex-Servicemen's Fund.

Figure 74: Contestants for the Mobil Song Quest, *Star*, 1961. Ritchie Scrapbook 1961. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Judging took place by National Orchestra conductor John Hopkins who listened at the adjacent 3YA studio where the concert was being broadcast. At the conclusion of the programme of the singers' performances and orchestral interludes, Hopkins arrived at the theatre and announced the results; first prize was won by Aucklander Patricia Price with Coates's *I Heard You Singing* and Bizet's *Habanera*. Once again, the orchestra's performance was applauded: 'The...orchestra played the accompaniments with sensitively musical finesse [and] the support was always fully adequate' wrote C. F.B. Ritchie's orchestral arrangements were 'skilfully spaced out for the instruments so that sonority was achieved without thickness'. Mobil not only sponsored the event, they paid for the production of the winning performances on a 45 two-sided single which could be collected from local Mobil service stations.



Figure 75: Mobil Record Club recording of the Gilbert and Sullivan section winner, William Johnson. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

It was not only Ritchie's skill as director and orchestrator which received praise on this occasion; the Standard Vacuum Oil Company (N.Z.) Ltd, which sponsored the event, wrote to Ritchie personally to acknowledge their appreciation for the organisational aspects of the event:

Though we have staged this concert on three previous occasions, it is fair to say that our association this time has been outstandingly satisfying [...]. We have enjoyed dealing with a group as competent, as co-operative and as businesslike as the John Ritchie String Orchestra [...]. We found you a joy to work with and a credit to your city and profession [...]. We would very much like to use your group in future projects if you are agreeable.⁴⁰⁴

An element of Ritchie's composing comprised of arrangements such as *Eight Folk Dances for Chamber Orchestra* in April 1960, which was followed two years later by *Nine Folk Dances*. These were commissioned by the New Zealand publishing company A.W. and A.H. Reed for education purposes. Reed (later Kiwi Records) began producing recordings in 1957 to support its own education publications specifically those related to Maori language, physical education, and folk song texts.

1962-1976 – Professor

Added responsibilities as Professor of Music from 1962 increased the pressure Ritchie was under but nonetheless he was able to pen some arrangements and incidental music. Additionally he completed work on the String Quartet. He wrote the music for three Canterbury Repertory Theatre Society productions including Moliere's *Le Malade Imagineaire* for voices and harpsichord, *The Tempest* for voices and strings – of which there were forty-five musical cues – and *Cinderella*. *The Tempest* was staged for the second Shakespeare Festival in the city in August while the pantomime *Cinderella* for solos, chorus and orchestra plus arrangements

⁴⁰⁴ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1961.

with Brian Barrett was presented for a season from 8 to 17 December at the Majestic Theatre.

A second LP by the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra of New Zealand composers was released in 1962. Featuring David Farquhar's Dance Suite for *Ring Round the Moon* on side one, Ritchie's *Clarinet Concertino* and Larry Pruden's *Harbour Nocturne* completed the recording. While Farquhar's work was the most prominent and expected to have wide appeal, the concertino was praised for its demonstration of the clarinet's range and attributes which soloist Frank Gurr deftly illustrated.⁴⁰⁵

Music performance and orchestral music in particular had advanced immeasurably in Christchurch under Ritchie's direction particularly since the formation of the John Ritchie String Orchestra, and optimism was high that Christchurch would soon boast a full symphony orchestra. Together with his academic responsibilities as Professor of Music and his increasing administration duties, Ritchie found it even more difficult to put time aside for composing and his output in 1963 was limited to the Royal Fanfare and arrangements for two of the arias performed in April. Of particular importance, however, was the publication of his *Clarinet Concertino* by Novello which was subsequently critiqued, albeit briefly, by composer Edmund Rubbra in the April 1964 edition of *Music and Letters*. Whilst Rubbra notes that there was little to commend the work in terms of new musical ideas, he also highlights its strengths: 'Its virtues are in the effectiveness of the writing for both soloist and the accompanying instruments and in the alert rhythms'.⁴⁰⁶

Aside from *A Wedding Song* Ritchie's output was limited to arrangements in 1965 although several of his works were performed over the year. The Auckland Festival in June incorporated a series of lunchtime concerts of New Zealand Music, the third and last of which consisted of Ronald Tremain's *Variation for*

⁴⁰⁵ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1962. Newspaper cutting, 'Records' [n.d.].

⁴⁰⁶ Edmund Rubbra, *Music and Letters*, 45.2, (April, 1964).

Violin and Viola (1959), *Three Medieval Latin Lyrics* (1961) by Canterbury graduate Anna Lockwood and Ritchie's *Quartet in G Minor* which he had completed in 1962. In reviewing the recital A.C.K. opened with: 'The concert of music yesterday [...]sent [the] audience away in a much more hopeful and satisfied frame of mind than certain other concerts of contemporary music that have been heard lately', and specifically of Ritchie's work that it 'is more interesting rhythmically than harmonically [...] [and] some flagging in the composer's inspiration at the beginning of the last [movement]'.⁴⁰⁷

In June *Kyrie and Gloria* (1964) was premiered for the Royal Christchurch Musical Society's first subscription concert of the year. Along with three other New Zealand compositions – Vernon Griffiths's *Song of Joy*, a Mass by Ronald Tremain and David Farquhar's *The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo* – Ritchie had been commissioned to compose a work by the Society and APRA as part of their initiative to support local composers. Arranged for SATB and String Orchestra, the performance of his new work, under Ritchie's direction, was well-received. Preceded by Dvořák's *Te Deum* and three arias by Haydn, Handel and Mendelssohn in the first half and followed by Beethoven's *Mass in C* after the interval, it succeeded in distinguishing itself nonetheless: 'The successful debut [...] was all the more notable because it created such a deep impression in the august company of Dvořák and Beethoven' and 'judicious use of chromaticism in conjunction with harmonies which are contemporary but pleasingly free of cacophony' (M.T.D). C.F.B. wrote: 'This music establishes instant rapport in that the listener feels that he is personally involved in the meaning of the music [...]. There is adventure in the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic structure of the music which challenges as well as delights'. Perhaps more meaningful because of its spiritual significance to Ritchie at that time was a telegram dated 21 June from Bishop Ashby (1923-1988) which read: 'Congratulations Missa Brevis Encore'.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁷ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1962.

⁴⁰⁸ Originally Ritchie was going to complete the Mass with a Credo, Sanctus, Agnus and Dei but this plan did not come to fruition.

The Royal Harmonic Society's programme of choral works on 25 August was a twentieth-century fest sandwiched between the opening item, Handel's *Zadok the Priest* and the closing work, Bach's *Sanctus* from his B minor mass. The programme included three New Zealand compositions: Ritchie's *Lord, When the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace*, Griffiths's *A Song of Joy (Part One)* and Bill Hawkey's *The Avon*, written specially for the choir's trip to Britain to perform for the Commonwealth Arts Festival in September alongside the works of Britten, Rubbra, Kodaly and Vaughan Williams. The concert was, in essence, a rehearsal for the forthcoming tour overseas; the same programme was performed for five of their concerts in Glasgow, Birmingham, Windsor, Cardiff and Westminster Abbey, London. Reviews of the choir's performance in London commented on the New Zealand compositions: 'the two professional works from Canterbury University were solid, conscientiously constructed, old fashioned by present standards,' noting that Griffiths's was in the Stanford tradition and John Ritchie's 'gentle motet [...] owing more to Parry'.⁴⁰⁹ More credence was placed on Hawkey's *Avon* which the writer found to be 'much more interesting'. A second publication (from L. C. M. Saunders) reported the following: 'Griffiths was singable and straightforward. The writing lies less gratefully for the voices in William Hawkey's setting of *The Avon*. In a motet by John Ritchie the words and music were beautifully matched. There were lovely turns of phrase, and the ending was exquisite'. Additionally, a report on a BBC broadcast of the Harmonic Society's Chorale only remarked 'My first impression of the merits of the New Zealand compositions were confirmed at this second hearing'.

Ritchie's composing activities during 1966 were centred on the latter part of the year with all new works written for specific ensembles and events. They included three vocal works: *Sakura* for soprano and piano specially arranged for Rita Streich and Maurice Till's recital on 24 September; *Mass for Unity* for unison singing and organ for the Auckland Liturgical Conference; and *Zoological Logic* for the Christchurch Harmonic Society. Additional Ritchie works were also performed throughout the year. The four New Zealand works commissioned by

⁴⁰⁹ Ritchie papers, Scrapbook 1965; 'Critic Praises Work by William Hawkey', newspaper cutting [n.d.].

APRA in 1964 which had since been recorded by the NZBC Symphony Orchestra were broadcast at weekly intervals in April and included *Kyrie and Gloria* which aired on 2YC and 4YC. *Torches, Torches* (1954) was performed by the Christchurch Harmonic Society as the first of a set of Christchurch composers' works for their Christmas Carols concert in early December along with *Lullay, My Liking* (Dorothy Buchanan), *Of the dark past, a Child is born* (Chorale Ladies) (Ross Harris), *Wither's Rocking Hymn* (Brian Bennett), and *A Huron Carol* (David Sell).

Composing continued to take a back seat during 1969 although Ritchie was able to complete *Haka Wahine* in December. For reciter and brass band, the work was commissioned by the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation in October as a four minute entry piece for the National Band to perform in Osaka, Japan during Expo 1970 on New Zealand's National Day, 8 July.⁴¹⁰ A fee of one hundred and ten dollars was offered which included the provision of the score and parts. Performances of Ritchie's works included *Partita for Brass Quintet* in a programme at the University Hall on 24 July. Sponsored by Lane, Walker, Rudkin Ltd., the recital of brass and woodwind works featured 'International Brass Players' trumpeters Albert Mackinnon and Michael Gibbs, and trombonists John McIvor and Neil Dixon.⁴¹¹ Also performing was a 'Quartet of Clarinets'; Frank Gurr, Alan Gold, Walter Hamer and Ronald Weatherburn. The recital comprised mainly twentieth-century works including Hindemith and Hovhanness together with another New Zealand piece *Little Suite for four clarinets* by Robert Burch.

The University's centennial in 1973 provided an opportunity for new celebratory music and the University Council commissioned Ritchie to compose a work for the occasion. Using the Latin motto text which accompanied the original University's Coat of Arms, *Ergo Tua Rura Manebunt – A Commemorative Mosaic* scored for SATB, flute, brass, strings and timpani and dedicated to the Vice-Chancellor Neville Phillips, was completed in April. The seven-movement

⁴¹⁰ Ritchie papers, 'Correspondence 1960 to 1970', folder, letter from NZBC to Ritchie, 21 October 1969.

⁴¹¹ Ritchie papers, 'Programmes' folder.

cantata featured as the final work for the Centennial Concert on Sunday, 6 May at the Town Hall.⁴¹² Ritchie conducted the performance by the University's Centennial Choir and Chamber Orchestra with players from the New Zealand Army Band. The fanfare which formed part of both the first and last movement was interspersed throughout the centennial concert. Vice-Chancellor, Neville Phillips, expressed his appreciation to Ritchie shortly afterwards.

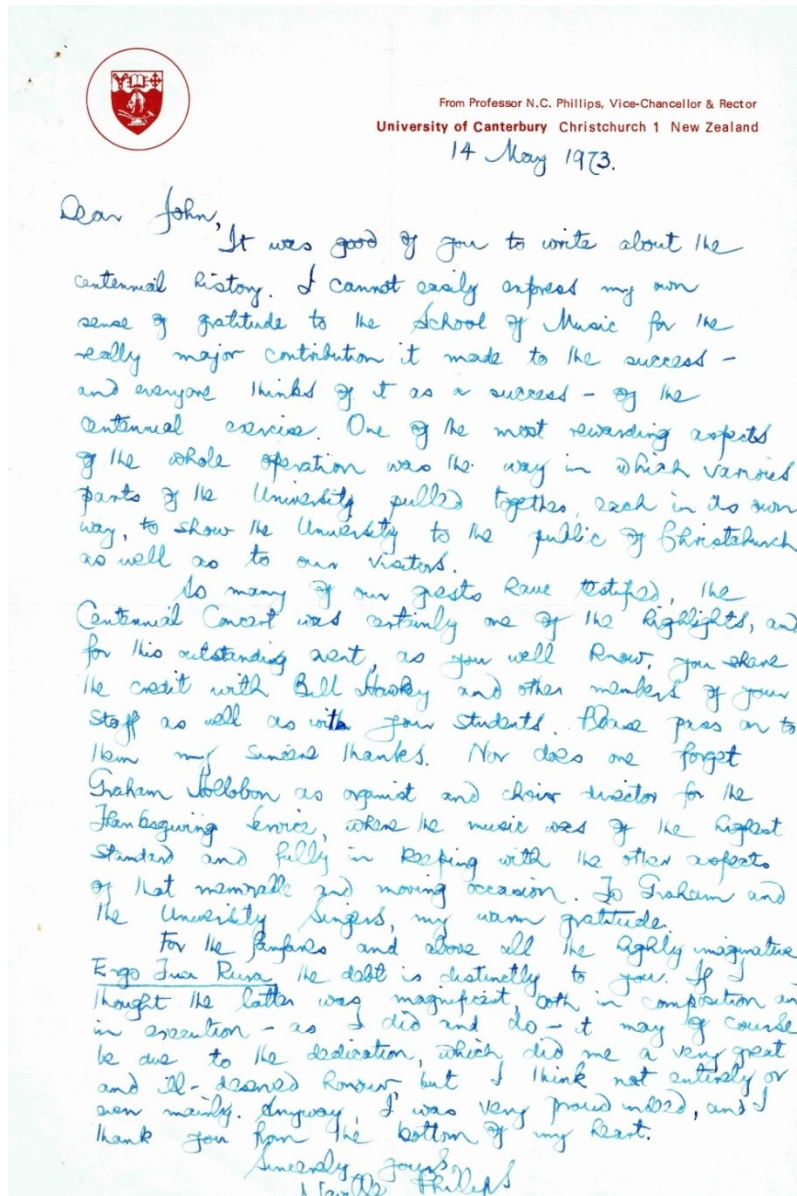


Figure 76: Letter from Neville Phillips to Ritchie, 14 May 1973 about the University of Canterbury Centennial 1973. Used with permission of the Ritchie family (see Appendix G).

⁴¹² Ibid.

Also on the programme was Lilburn's *Landfall in Unknown Seas* conducted by Ritchie which was narrated by the librettist Allen Curnow who had travelled to Christchurch for the event. According to Evan Roberts who reviewed the work for the *Listener* after it was aired on radio in August, Ritchie was aware of the influences of Orff in the 'simple melodies and pounding rhythms' and the 'pleasantly mild dissonances' of Kodaly. Notwithstanding, Roberts viewed the music as predominantly consonant but made with a 'daring effect' of ending with an added sixth. With the form following the general outline of a Mass but with a range of languages interposed with snippets of student songs, mathematical formulae and chanting of the motto, Roberts commented that it was 'a work which [...] accurately expresses the musical ethos of this country'.⁴¹³

In the same year Anthea Moller accompanied by Maurice Till performed Ritchie's *Four Zhivago Songs* as the final item in a programme at the James Hay Theatre. C.F.B., in his review of the concert, which also included songs by Rachmaninov, Mahler and Messaien, wrote that the New Zealand works 'fully justified their inclusion' and that the 'harmonies are splendidly effective [...] [and] most attractively and sensitively written'. Ian Dando echoed these sentiments: 'John Ritchie's *Dr Zhivago songs* certainly did not wilt in the exalted company of Mahler and Messaien [...]. [They] possess fluent vocality of line, detailed sense of word setting and a clearly discernible thematic economy and unity in the piano part'.⁴¹⁴

As previously stated, due to time constraints and his philosophy of music in practice, most of Ritchie's works were commissioned or composed for a specific purpose. On at least one occasion however an event prompted Ritchie to spontaneously compose regardless of the outcome – although as it was borne out, the piece was played following its completion. That event was the death of the Prime Minister, Norman Kirk, on 31 August 1974. For many New Zealanders this marked a significant loss to the country. At the time the Labour Party with Kirk at

⁴¹³ Ritchie papers, Undated Newspaper Cuttings folder.

⁴¹⁴ Ritchie papers, Undated Newspaper Cuttings folder.

the helm had been in power for just under two years, after defeating the governing National party two months after the Christchurch Town Hall opening in 1972.

Kirk, who had come from poor beginnings with minimal formal education, was perceived as a voice for the people both in New Zealand and beyond. His death was a huge shock to his followers and Ritchie, on hearing of his death was moved to compose a work in his honour within a few hours of the announcement.

Funeral Music for Norman Kirk was subsequently played by the Christchurch Salvation Army Citadel Band at a special service for Kirk on 5 September in the Christchurch Town Hall.⁴¹⁵ Ritchie decreed that the piece was never to be performed again.

1977-1985 – Professor and Acting Vice-Chancellor

With the added responsibility of Acting Vice-Chancellor in 1977, Ritchie's composing time was even further restricted; however in August he attended to requests for music, completing a Christchurch Girls High School fanfare with an introduction to the hymn *Thy Hand O God has Guided* which had been commissioned in September 1976 for the school's Centennial Service.⁴¹⁶ He was also asked by the Samuel Marsden Collegiate School in Wellington if he would compose an Overture for their one hundred year celebrations in August of 1978 which would be performed by college students and staff. This meant that certain restrictions were in place for the work determined by the numbers and ability of the predominantly student orchestral players. Correspondence between the principal and Ritchie indicate some concern as to constraints on his time; however he completed the work in April 1978 in time for its performance in August of that year.

Ritchie had kept in contact with the Alard quartet members, retaining a close friendship with violinist Donald Hopkins and his family who became regular

⁴¹⁵ Originally composed for strings, trumpet and timpani, Ritchie arranged the piece for brass on learning of the Band's involvement in the service two days before. Once completed, he phoned the bandmaster to advise him of the work's existence. The parts were provided to players only an hour before the service began. Ritchie papers; *Press*, 6 September 1974.

⁴¹⁶ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, letter to Ritchie from Carole Graham, 23 September 1976.

visitors to Christchurch. The Quartet returned to Canterbury for 1981 and 1982 performing regularly as an ensemble and with orchestral groups. On 30 June 1982 they joined the University Chamber Orchestra and Singers conducted by Ritchie with soloists Pam Keightely, Judy Bellingham and Albert Risely for a recital at the Great Hall. The programme comprised two early symphonies by Carl Friedrich Abel and Giovanni Battista Sammartini followed by a feast of twentieth-century offerings.⁴¹⁷ Two new works which had been specially composed for the music students were premiered: Chloe Moon's *Nonette*, a six movement piece for strings and woodwind and *Snow Goose: Poem for Flute and Orchestra* by Ritchie. The works received excellent reviews for both composition and performance with Margaret Buchanan for the *Press* perceiving *Snow Goose* ideally suited as a sound track for a film, 'for the soft, sustained opening evoked a lonely sunrise, with wheeling seabirds and gentle sea'.

Of significance composition-wise in 1981 was the commission of a fanfare for a special Dedication Service for the official opening of the Fleet Air Arm Museum M.O.T.A.T 'Fairey Swordfish' on 1 June. Ritchie was not able to attend but fellow Fleet Air Arm pilot, Geoff Brown, reported that *Swordfish – a Commemoration Fanfare* was well played and that with the 'irregular thumps on the big bass drum one would have imagined that the war had restarted'.⁴¹⁸

A sixtieth birthday tribute for Ritchie was broadcast on the concert programme in September and several interviews with Ritchie were conducted in the lead up to the event. Two topics in particular were noted: his views on reviewers and himself as a composer. He expressed annoyance at the way in which critics generally commented on the performance rather than the composition itself.⁴¹⁹ He believed that they should ensure that they 'safeguard the composer's integrity' when critiquing a performance which fell short of expected standards. Further, they should 'realise that what they write is irrevocably down on paper long after the performance is gone. As a composer, I've suffered because of that attitude'. He

⁴¹⁷ Ritchie papers, Programmes folder.

⁴¹⁸ Ritchie papers, Correspondence folder, letter to Ritchie from Geoff Brown 6 June 1980.

⁴¹⁹ Ritchie papers, Macmillan Brown folder.

was more genial when he spoke to freelance journalist John Goulter as he considered his composing self: ‘I know precisely what sort of composer I am – not a serious academic type but a workmanlike professional who composes in the hope that people will like the music’.⁴²⁰

In celebration of Schola Musica’s twenty-first birthday in 1982, Kiwi Pacific Records produced and released ‘Music for Strings. N.Z. Composer Edition’. The LP included Ritchie’s newly composed and BCNZ commissioned work *Aquarius*, *Shadows* by Chloe Moon, John Elmsley’s *Neither From Nor Towards* and Anthony Ritchie’s *Concertino for Piano and Strings*. Reviewer Allan Francis noted that it was ‘one of the finest recordings’ of the players to date and of Ritchie’s work that it was ‘a captivating piece for strings in the Italian style’.⁴²¹



Figure 77: Back of LP ‘Music for Strings’, Ritchie centre of photograph. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

⁴²⁰ Ritchie papers, Loose Cuttings folder.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

In early 1982 Peter Nisbet, General Manager of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, spoke to Ritchie about some work which might be commissioned for the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Salvation Army Centenary Concert that was due to take place early the following year. A written request was received by Ritchie in September 1982 to write arrangements for band and orchestra of Dean Goffin's (1916-1984, awarded Knight Bachelor 1983) *Rhapsodic Variations – My Strength My Tower* and the Festival March *Crusaders* for the opening of the concert, and Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* to close.

Ritchie accepted the commission and duly completed the work although he was a week later than agreed with the *Rhapsodic Variations* due to some difficulties he encountered in turning the work with its inherent brass idiom into an 'integrated band-orchestra piece'.⁴²² He was able to overcome this by arranging each variation as principally orchestral or brass, allowing the brass to predominate over the orchestral accompaniment as the piece progressed. A commissioned work *O!* by Lyell Cresswell was also premiered at the event. The *1812 Overture* received a further airing later in the year when the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra elected to play Ritchie's arrangement including the band parts for Wellington's Michael Fowler Centre's opening in September. Additionally, to fully utilise the large choir, Ritchie was asked to provide choral parts for the opening and closing segments, and the complete work was duly performed for the evening's climax.

A special programme 'Father and Son' was broadcast on the concert programme in 1984 and included Ritchie's new work *Missa Brevis* sung by the Cecilian Singers with Graham Hollobon on organ and conductor Nan Anderson. The work also received its first liturgical presentation at St Mary's Parish, Merivale, early the following year with the parish choir providing the responses and singing the recessional hymn. Towards the latter part of 1984 Ritchie received confirmation from Christopher Brodrick, the general manager of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra (CSO), that they would pay him a commission of one thousand dollars for his newly created work the *Partita Concertante Pisces*, so-named as the birth

⁴²² Ritchie papers, Correspondence folder, comments accompanying letter to Peter Nisbet, 22 February 1983.

sign of the orchestra.⁴²³ Indeed, two original members of the John Ritchie String Orchestra's first performance on 7 March 1959, Frances De Goldi and Thomas Rogers, were current Christchurch Symphony Orchestra members. The work was dedicated to violinist Carl Pini who was both soloist and conductor for the performance. Ritchie delivered a talk on the piece in one of the Town Hall's conference rooms on the evening of the work's premiere by the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra on 3 November. Speaking about his composing a few days later to the *Press* for 'The living arts' column, he talked of writing to please himself or 'a la Ritchie' rather than for others, the critics, or what was in mode: 'If people like it, I'm happy. If they don't, I'm not unhappy although in retrospect I usually agree with them'.

1985 was a significant year for Ritchie and the University's Music Department but, or perhaps because of his impending retirement, Ritchie was kept busy composing and performing. With his retirement date imminent – the official date being 31 May – several interviews and functions took place in April and May in honour of Ritchie and his contribution to music at Canterbury. Garry Arthur of the *Press* spoke to Ritchie in April about his future composing plans. Ritchie was currently engaged in a work for guitarist Edrick Banks and he needed to complete that but he was very much looking forward to writing an overture for the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra in honour of Papanui Road. Consideration of themes and form had already been done: 'One movement of the overture will be to do with [the Carlton], one to do with the Papanui roundabout, and one with the Merivale Mall'. Spending more time on composing was a priority since, if he had been fortunate enough to have the means, he would have spent all of his working life as a composer. As it was his works numbered two hundred sixty-one albeit most were shorter pieces for either choir or string orchestra. Although he was aware that others would not think of his work as avant-garde, he considered that his composing style had evolved over time 'towards the more modern style'.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ 'The Living Arts', *Press*, 7 November 1984.

⁴²⁴ Ritchie papers, 'Macmillan Brown' folder.

Papanui Road: Specimen Work – Analytical Commentary

The orchestral overture *Papanui Road* was the work which was to symbolise the start of a new era in Ritchie's composing output. From the start of his working life at Canterbury University in 1946 when he was forging a career in music with determination, energy and focus, through his middle period as an established educator, writer and critic, arranger and music director and administrator and into his later years as mentor and advisor, his attention was often directed into many different facets of music of which composing was just one. As with a number of Ritchie's works, *Papanui Road* had been commissioned, although Ritchie alluded to the idea for the work having been formed prior to any request. It may well have been a happy coincidence that the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra asked him to compose a piece for its twenty-fifth anniversary concert at the time of Ritchie's decision to concentrate on composing upon retirement from the University of Canterbury. In fact Ritchie spent much of his final year as an academic drafting and completing the score with a future committed to composing in mind.

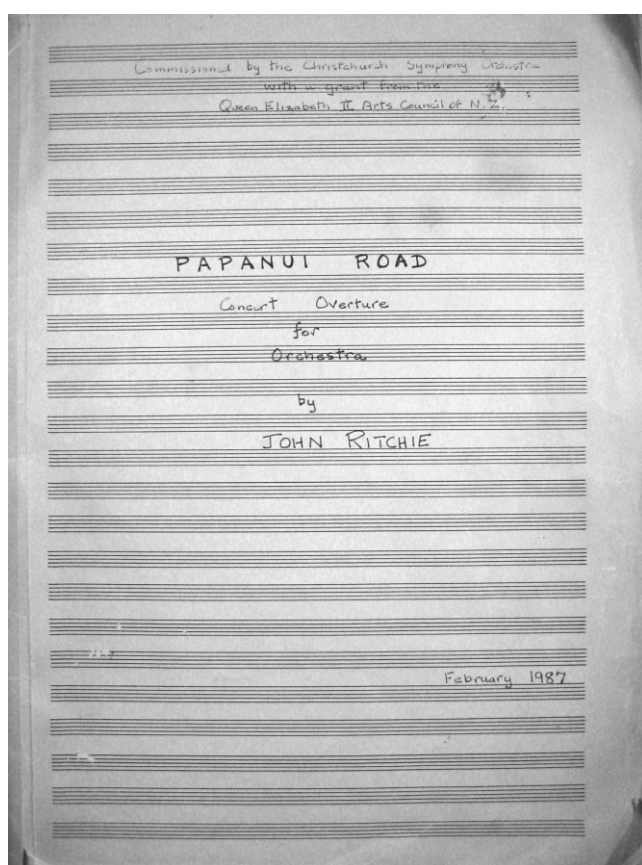


Figure 78: *Papanui Road* hand written score, front cover, 1987. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

The work's first performance took place on 2 May 1987 under the baton of American conductor Donald Johanos. Although Ritchie was pleased with the performance, he was less happy with subsequent audience responses which focussed solely on the programmatic elements such as sounds which depicted the non-musical features outlined in the work. He was particularly dismayed when these sentiments were conveyed by fellow musicians whom he felt ought to have been capable of greater insight. Ritchie believed that expressions of enjoyment of the 'sounds' of Papanui Road such as the St Andrews College pipe band, the tram bell, and church choir singing equated to the work being thought of as a 'showcase piece' which provided amusement and entertainment but lacked musical depth. Ritchie's displeasure at such a view – a paradox since the composer's own concert notes directed the audience to these programmatic aspects – was based, in part, on the planning and expertise invested in the piece by the composer as well as his own feelings surrounding the events described in the work. In the Promethean Edition of the score, he attempted to rectify this earlier perception by expanding on the original programme notes and in particular adding his own view of the overture as 'a serious, even a solemn, nostalgic work'.⁴²⁵

Papanui Road was once the main route by which European settlers in Papanui Bush (now Papanui Domain), situated at the north of Christchurch, transported the timber from sawmills by dray into Market Square (renamed Victoria Square in 1903), from around 1850. Market Square was the central hub of Christchurch and, aside from its commercial function, hosted the first public utilities such as the post office, police station, immigration barracks, and women's prison. By 1857 the entire forested area of Papanui Bush had been felled but the road remained a main thoroughfare in Christchurch connecting the northern roads to Victoria Square and onto Colombo Street which traverses to the suburb of Cashmere at the bottom of the port hills. An electric tram service from the early twentieth century included a route from Papanui to Cashmere. This was the last service to run when buses replaced the trams in 1954.

⁴²⁵ Ritchie papers, programme notes for *Papanui Road*, 1987.

Papanui Road encompasses elements of Ritchie's life and while the significance of these are personal – enjoying the tram ride with his wife and children up Papanui Road to the bottom of the Cashmere Hills for instance – the recognisable features which can be heard by listeners place Ritchie and his family at the heart of the work, exemplifying Ritchie's belief that contemporary life is part of the composer and his output.⁴²⁶ The biographical component which underpins the work is both stated in the words of the composer and in the music itself where programme is 'any preface in intelligible language added to a piece of instrumental music, by means of which the composer intends to guard the listener against a wrong poetical interpretation, and to direct his attention to the poetical idea of the whole or to a particular part of it'.⁴²⁷

As stated, *Papanui Road* was begun during Ritchie's final year as an academic in 1985 and was completed by February 1987. This programmatic work is a narrative of the composer's physical surroundings over a period of time, depicting extra-musical elements within that environment and expressing the composer's thoughts and emotions surrounding these events as indicated by the programme notes. These elements are represented by motifs and themes which are broadly detailed in the score by the composer.

Following traditional principles for writing tone poems, the work is motivic and rests on a tonal harmonic framework. The work is a single movement piece with nine sections and could also be understood within the framework of sonata form with both an introduction and coda. There is one distinct motif, 'Shosty' and two or three secondary motifs which are subsequently repeated exactly or altered, and one primary and two secondary themes. Each of the main motifs and themes signifies a phenomenon or being:

⁴²⁶ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2010.

⁴²⁷ *The Oxford Companion to Music*, ed. by Alison Latham, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 1004.

1. The opening motif represents Shosty the Ritchie family cat.

First Motif ('Shosty')
b1

Answer
b2

b5
First motif repeated at original pitch

Answer b6 begins
semitone lower &
entry crotchet
earlier than first time

Originally youngest son's Anthony's cat, Shosty was, as is often the case, left in the care of the adults in the family home and hence largely to his own devices. He would roam around the neighbourhood, in particular the local eateries at Merivale village where he would be proffered food in response to his antics of the neglected, starving cat as he went from door to door, leaving as soon as he had had his fill of the various delicacies – both offered and taken. Eventually, ill health due to his gluttony developed and the Ritchies were obliged to ask the business owners to abstain from responding to Shosty's self-serving cries for sustenance while he suffered the ignominy of being administered heart medication and placed on a strict diet. Similarities to the composer's state of health and personality traits – heart issues and a blend of ebullience and detachment in particular – were not lost on Ritchie and earned the ginger and white moggy a high degree of respect and affection albeit from a distance since he was usually out on his travels. The motif, like the cat on its journey, progresses its way throughout the work in various forms – fragmented, developing, and sometimes weaving in and out of the other themes before it seems to disappear completely beneath the sounds of human busyness and urban din. But eventually the noise subsides and Shosty is there again at the end, a quieter statement as he slinks back to his home, reaching warmth and safety just before the door slams on its D major chord.

- Motif 2 is stated first by the trumpets as an interjection at bar 9.

Motif 2 - Trumpet interjection - repeated 5th higher b72 with oboes, clarinets, bassoons & brass
b9

It is then repeated at bar 72 by the oboes, clarinets, bassoons and brass a fifth higher.

- Motif 3 is stated by the clarinets at bar 30...

Motif 3
stated by clarinets with main (Shosty) theme trumpets
b30

'Shosty'
b33 Trumpet

while Shosty 'blows his trumpet' at bar 33 and the pattern is repeated before the violins echo the motif an octave higher at bar 34.

- The main theme, first stated by the horns at bar 34 while the violins play

motif echoed with first violins
octave higher with horns playing
First subject/theme
b34

First Theme

b34
Horns

b38

Motif 3 is 'expressed in various treatments' throughout the work and denotes the constant movement and clamour generated by people on the busy thoroughfare. The composer refers specifically to the various modes of transport – taxis, cycles, buses, trucks and cars – which travel past the stationary buildings lining the road as the drivers and passengers

go about their business, wending their way to and from work, school, church, entertainment and shopping.

5. The second theme is first introduced at bar 92 and relates in structure



to sonata form as the second subject; however it is also possible to equate it with the St Albans stream which ‘slips by secretly at the back of the Merivale shops’ which the composer refers to, in particular as the melody intertwines with Shosty at bar 96 in its first appearance. Its melodic and rhythmic nature and the use of mainly woodwind and strings produces a lighter tone colour that is far removed from the brass and full orchestra playing of the main theme which epitomizes the bustle of the main road. It is thus easy to ‘see’ the cat as he meanders effortlessly and secretly alongside the trickling stream on his journey to his favourite eateries.

6. The third ‘Bagpipe’ theme is both a literalism – a lone bagpiper playing



an air in the St Andrew’s College grounds – and a nostalgic view of the archetypal British country village, reminiscent of the composer’s time spent in Scotland and England during the war. These were grand days of flying, playing, and friendships but they had a sense of unreality about them and Ritchie was fully aware that a return to home would bring its

challenges as well as stability. The theme metamorphosizes over its two restatements at bars 301 and 337, and brings both listener and composer to the present day 'picturesque Christchurch gardens and streams' where calm prevails. This reinforces the biographical element inherent in the work as Ritchie remembers wistfully those long gone heady days of his youth which altered the trajectory of his life and ultimately determined his career path and long-time residency in Christchurch.

7. Additionally, there are literal representations that form part of the linear narrative such as the tram bell during the development section and the motor horn in the finale, both of which add to the noise and commotion that the orchestral scoring exhibits. Similarly, the borrowed melody of *Onward Christian Soldiers* which serves to indicate the choir's rehearsal as the traveller journeys past St Mary's Church, Merivale, is so well-known as to alert the listener to consider its contextual function. These representations which are clearly explained in the programme extended beyond the bare reflection of the instrument's name and sound for the composer. In composing the work, Ritchie set the scene, literally and figuratively in which he could explore the past at a pace to suit.

Sonata Form

The composer suggested that the piece could be understood in terms of sonata form, although it sits more comfortably as a linear programmatic work.

Exposition

- Introduction: Bars 1-26, the pithy 'Shosty' motif is introduced culminating in a Fanfare at bars 16-26. Four bars of rest leads to:
- Transition/Bridge: Four bar motif, repeated Shosty motif (muted trumpet) and secondary motif on clarinets.
- First Subject Group: Bars 34-42. This is repeated at bars 53-61 and alternates with the 'Shosty' motif repeated and developed using sequence and expansion from bars 42-51 and bars 61-70. Note the equal bar length of each main theme and 'Shosty' motif/theme. Bars 51- 52 transitions

between the two with repeated quavers on B unison at letter 'A'. Note the hemiola bars 49-51 brass, clarinets (two bars only) and bassoons. The theme is restated by woodwind and brass with the strings on repeated note B (8 bars) before Shosty reappears in the woodwind. Bars 71-75 echoes the trumpet interjection from bars 9-12 before Shosty takes over bars 75-78 then hemiola bar 79, expansion and ornamentation to bar 87 followed by four bars rest 88-92 and echoes the end of the introduction and fanfare from bar 13.

- Second Subject Group: Bars 92-96 in F sharp minor on flutes with the transition motif from bar 30 on bassoon and clarinets (clarinets with altered first interval) 'Shosty' entering bar 96 on oboe. The second theme is restated an octave lower and at bar 100, the clarinets and bassoon with strings play the transition motif followed by an expanded 'Shosty' theme as in bars 68-70 (altered). This is then restated at bar 112 in B flat minor. Bars 116-119 is a final restatement of the theme at 'C' with trumpets – second beat of fourth bar of theme (bar 119) is altered for the cadence to bar 120 before middle section – and woodwinds with a variation before the middle section.

Development

- First theme bassoons and violins (with woodwind) fortissimo brass at bar 120 with change of rhythm alternating bars of 4/4 and 3/4 and remaining 3/4 from bars 129-130 with brass bar 130 First Theme. Clarinets then restate trumpets' material.
- Note that the theme at bar 180 also reappears at bars 301 and 337.

Development
Marziale First Theme restatement in 4/4 with second part transposed up a 4th.
b120

Tpt. 1

Bsns.

Vlns.

Con Moto
b130
Cl.1

First theme restated but with second part answer remaining on original note.

b188

Recapitulation

- The change of tempo at bar 341 marks the start of the recapitulation as the trumpets play a fast moving first subject with altered rhythm.

Tonal centres/keys

- While the tonal centre is not immediately clear at the start, the work ends in an emphatic D major chord corresponding to its final key signature which first appears at bar 382.

| Bar numbers | Key signature |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1-129 | # |
| 130-319 | |
| 320-340 | ## |
| 341-381 | <i>b</i> |
| 382-440 | ## |

- One anomaly is the short twenty-one bar section from bar 280 with the use of whole tone which follows a strident passage emulating the beginning fanfare and precedes the restatement of the rather mournful bagpipe theme. The placement and contrasting tonality to the rest of the work suggests it refers to a significant event such as the death and loss of Ian Botting which the composer refers to but does not specifically identify in the programme notes.

Programme Music

- The division of its sections is characterised by alternating short (around 30 bars) and longer (around 60 bars or double) passages thus:

Table 3: *Papanui Road*: division of sections

| | Bar numbers | Total bars | Themes/motifs |
|----|-------------|---|---|
| 1 | 1-29 | 29 | Motif 1, motif 2 |
| 2 | 30-91 | 62 (66 with four bar repeat from bars 30-33) | Motif 3, Theme 1, Motif 1, Motif 2 |
| 3 | 92-120 | 29 | Theme 2, Motif 3, [motif 1 dev.] |
| 4 | 121-177 | 57 | Theme 1 |
| 5 | 178-210 | 33 | Theme 3 |
| 6 | 211-279 | 69 | Motif 1 fanfare dev. |
| 7 | 280-300 | 21 | Whole tone – heralds the death of Ian Botting |
| 8 | 301-340 | 40 | binary-theme 3, contrast, theme 3 |
| 9 | 341-381 | 41 | Theme 1 |
| 10 | 382-440 | 59 | Theme 3 development, Motif 1 |

The total number of bars is 440 or 444 with the four bar repeat at bar 30. This corresponds to the now standard tuning of A440 or A4 although A444 also has been used. Knowing the composer, I would suggest this is not a coincidence but reflects his wit and sense of humour.

Notwithstanding each theme's representation, the composer's treatment of the musical elements mirrors that of his non-programmatic compositions by the use of altered rhythms, intervals, tonal centres and orchestration and in particular the

development of a fragment of a theme or motif. In this way, the piece is extended musically to correspond with its narrative; its length rather beyond the commission's brief for a six-minute work to open the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra's twenty-fifth anniversary concert. Significantly, in composing a biographical memoir for the celebration of an event in which he played a substantial part in the development of, it could be said that he was stating his own contribution to music in Christchurch and its symphony orchestra.

Further, while Ritchie may have been irritated by the focus on the realism of the musical elements by some listeners, the audience could be left in no doubt as to the composer's voice and life within the work. Ritchie had also expressed annoyance at the lack of recognition for his contribution to the development of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, a sentiment which he felt was further reinforced by the scant detail related to the orchestra's inception in the 2008 book *Classical Sparks: The Story of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra*.⁴²⁸ This irritation subsided over the time he spent with the author and, like other disagreements he had grappled with in the past, his view softened the more he spoke about his life especially as he looked towards what he believed was his final journey.

⁴²⁸ Tom Rogers and Simon Tipping, *Classical Sparks: The Story of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra* (Wellington: Dunmore Publishing, 2008).

Chapter 8: Post Retirement

Friendships, family, travel, composing and committees

That was something about Anita: she was very determined, I would think, that once he retired from music – from the school – that he should really wind down [...]. And I don't think he was actually ready to slow down.⁴²⁹

Nancy Sloane first met John and Anita Ritchie in 1955 when she accompanied her then fiancé Douglas (Doug) Sloane to the Ritchie's Francis Avenue, Christchurch home for pre-Christmas celebrations. The Ritchies, along with Vernon and Daphne Griffiths, were subsequently invited to the Sloanes's wedding which took place the following May but since both Anita and Daphne had recently given birth at the time, the two women were unable to be present at the ceremony. Nancy can recall her delight however when she noticed both John Ritchie and Vernon Griffiths amongst the guests as she walked down the aisle. This was especially significant since Doug had expressed to Nancy that he was unsure if they would attend as the two men's Catholic faith might preclude them from entering a church of a different denomination to their own.

Douglas Sloane was born some months earlier than Ritchie on 10 January 1921. He attended Christchurch Boys' High School where he, like Ritchie, enjoyed sport and music but, in his own words, was 'more of a practical musician'.⁴³⁰ Sloane sang in the St Michael's Anglican Choir directed by Vernon Griffiths and from 1930 to 1933 he attended the Teachers College music classes on Saturday mornings which Griffiths established and ran in Christchurch until his departure to Dunedin in 1933. Sloane played the violin as a youngster and through to high school where he was a member of the orchestra, as well as becoming

⁴²⁹ Nancy Sloane, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 10 November 2010). Recording and transcript held by the author.

⁴³⁰ Douglas Sloane, *Interview with Douglas Sloane* (interviewed by Julie Johnson for doctoral research) (Christchurch: 12 December 2008), recording and transcription held by the author.

accomplished in various band instruments including the cornet and trombone. In his last year at Boys' High when the bandmaster was suffering ill-health, he took over directing and conducting the brass band, a skill he attributed to Griffiths's influence. Sloane trained as a teacher completing a degree and later attained his LTCL in choral conducting. He taught in various country and town schools throughout his working life and was appointed Headmaster of Oxford District High School then Kirkwood Intermediate School before spending eleven years prior to retirement as an Inspector of Schools.

Like Ritchie, Sloane credits his musical introduction and background to Griffiths, from the local Saturday classes where sight reading was an integral part of learning through to conducting instruction which Griffiths provided for the more able students whose leadership qualities shone through. Sloane recalled too that Griffiths was generous to many families by providing and paying for holiday camps which children such as Ritchie and Sloane would otherwise not have enjoyed. Sloane believes that Griffiths also paid additional expenses such as tuition and examination fees which some parents simply could not afford rather than watch gifted students miss out on reaching their potential and enter the workforce at an early age. Sloane considers that Griffiths's benevolence was borne out of his own childhood in which 'his father had been an Anglican minister in Manchester in a pretty low-class area and he was very much against poor people having to suffer like that'.⁴³¹

Like the participants in this study who knew Griffiths, Griffiths's daughter, Janet Askin, spoke with high regard and fondness for Griffiths both as a father and as a humanitarian.⁴³² Griffiths's many kindnesses appear to have been a genuine desire to help those less fortunate and a strong belief that circumstances of birth should not compel children to suffer from a lack of education and ongoing hardship. The consequences of Griffiths's philanthropy cannot be overstated since it significantly altered the trajectory of the children's lives as Ritchie's life story

⁴³¹ Sloane, D., *Interview*.

⁴³² Janet Askin, in conversation with the author, 2008.

demonstrates. Griffiths's influence can also be seen in the way Ritchie extended goodwill towards his fellow humans. Like Griffiths, Ritchie converted to Catholicism although his case for doing so was not, as one might reasonably assume, simply to follow in Griffiths's footsteps. Ritchie spent considerable time and thought before finally deciding that the Catholic Church's guiding principles were those which he wanted to live his life by. There was no direct intervention by Griffiths in this decision; rather it was that Griffiths's values around social justice which had affected Ritchie early in his life were closely aligned to the Catholic teachings where:

Christian workers who, in combining harmoniously the diligent practice of their occupation with the salutary precepts of religion, protect effectively and resolutely their own temporal interests and rights, keeping a due respect for justice and a genuine desire to work together with other classes of society for the Christian renewal of all social life;⁴³³ the poor are opportunely assisted and the two classes of society are brought closer to each other,⁴³⁴ [and] the true aim of all social activity should be to help individual members of the social body, but never to destroy or absorb them.⁴³⁵

These principles are demonstrated generally in Ritchie's ability to converse and engage with people from all walks of life. He provided patronage to a number of significant local musical organisations, accepted commissions for important occasions, and readily spoke when requested at notable events; equally Ritchie would support individuals without connections, demonstrated by his willingness to help Bosnian refugee, Achmed Kafedžić, publicise his father's work. Ritchie had been introduced to Kafedžić and his family in the 1990s with the view that he might help them settle in their new country. Kafedžić was an educated man in his own right, previously a book publisher, but his attention was focussed on his now deceased father, Safet Kafedžić, a well-known and celebrated Bosnian poet.

⁴³³ 'The Holy See: Encyclical of Pope Pius XI', *The Vatican*, 33
<http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_11121925_quas-primas.html> [accessed 19 July 2019].

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴³⁵ Vernon Griffiths quoted Pope Pius XI in 'Culture and Music in New Zealand V: Training for Music Making', 16 October 1946.

Achmed was determined that Safet would not be forgotten amidst the ravages and chaos of war his homeland had experienced, and asking Ritchie to set his lyrics to music was one way he thought of to achieve this. In December 1997 Ritchie wrote the song *Cedah Te Da Dodjes* (I was waiting for you) for solo voice and piano to Safet Kafedžić's Yugoslavian verse, later adding a violin obbligato.

Sloane was fortunate to attend a number of holiday camps at Akaroa which Griffiths had arranged while resident in Christchurch. It appears Griffiths did not forget his Christchurch protégées after he left the city since Sloane recalled travelling with another boy, Russell Thompson, by train to Dunedin and then on by car to a camp, likely at Purakaunui. It was here on Boxing Day in 1935 where he first met Ritchie. It was the start of a lifelong friendship for the boys who clicked immediately, both recalling independently that they were coined then 'the terrible twins' by those who they were in contact with together. After the war Sloane remained close to the growing Ritchie family and the two men would regularly enjoy a drink or two at their favourite hostelry. Once Sloane was married with his own family, circumstances of work and family life meant that they did not always stay in close physical proximity; nonetheless the two families kept in touch, sometimes spending holidays together. Nancy recalls that on one trip to Akaroa together, they were visited by Vernon and Daphne Griffiths who arrived with Ralph and Pat Lilly from Nelson. In the earlier years the families sometimes met up in Nelson over the Christmas break at the Lilly's where the Ritchies were staying and Sloane would sing in the Nelson Cathedral Choir of which Lilly was the organist.

It was particularly after Ritchie's retirement that the two couples spent time in each other's company, dining out and relaxing at each other's homes, watching sport on television or listening to music. Coinciding with her own departure from teaching, Nancy remembers the occasion in May 1985 that they went out together to celebrate hers and Ritchie's joint retirement at the White Swan Hotel.⁴³⁶

⁴³⁶ 32 Tuam Street, Christchurch, now Archibalds.

Subsequently, the couples welcomed this coming of age and corresponding superannuation payment with regular monthly restaurant outings – always on a New Zealand Super payment day, Tuesday, and always heralded with Ritchie’s ubiquitous catchphrase ‘we owe it to ourselves’.

Over the next fifteen years they spent holidays together both locally at such places as Kaikoura and Akaroa as well as further afield to Australia, usually in the New Zealand winter months between July and August. Nancy recalled that their last trip together in 2000 was spent at Trinity Beach near Cairns in Queensland, a familiar holiday location, where they stayed at a rented apartment, explored the surrounding area and generally spent time relaxing. A week after their arrival at the resort Anita suffered a fall, landing backwards onto a rock and injuring her tailbone. She became progressively so unwell over the next few hours that Ritchie took her to Cairns hospital later that evening. Several tests were conducted including an x-ray which revealed small bone fractures. She was admitted to hospital where she remained for several days and was administered appropriate pain medication before being discharged. Within a week the pain had subsided to a manageable degree but the x-ray had also revealed an unexpected health concern, unrelated to the injury, for which the Ritchies were advised by medical staff to follow up with their own health professional on their return to New Zealand.

The news they received from this later medical visit was not what they had hoped for. Ritchie and Anita spent one last holiday at Trinity Beach the following year but sadly for Ritchie and family, Anita passed away within a relatively short time on 27 November 2001. Anita’s funeral service reflected the importance of family and friendships to the Ritchies; both father and son’s music was heard, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* from *Mass in Honour of St Paul* and *Music for Mum* respectively, and poignantly a 1950s recording of Anita singing *I Know that my Redeemer Liveth* was played. Additionally, Nancy Sloane felt very honoured to be asked by the family to give a tribute to Anita. With Anita’s passing, the couple’s traditional

Don Purdon, ‘Square Mile Pubs – 1984: Christchurch Pubs 1980’, *Nostalgia Black Hole* (2014) <<https://nostalgiablackhole.webs.com/Square%20Mile%20Pubs%20v0%202.pdf>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

Christmas cards for which Ritchie had regularly composed a miniature carol and had duplicated and distributed to friends and colleagues, ceased.⁴³⁷ Just over eight years later, Nancy lost her husband to ill-health and in a reciprocal gesture Ritchie, who had been Sloane's friend for over seventy years, delivered the eulogy at his funeral service.

The Sloanes's interviews epitomise this study's participant material which was provided by those who generally looked back favourably on their interaction with Ritchie. This concentration is due to the fact that participants were selected based on relationships formed and maintained during Ritchie's life since it was expected that they would offer substantial information. While it was made clear to them that Ritchie encouraged honest discussion about him during their interview, there was little spoken which reflected a view that Ritchie had undesirable traits or that participants endured negative experiences in their association with Ritchie. This does not necessarily mean that he was well liked by all or that he or his work was not the subject of criticism, rather that this was not specifically sought or spoken of by participants.

This perhaps unbalanced view of Ritchie and his life is nonetheless reflective of life history research as noted in Chapter 1. The researcher begins the study from a particular perspective which continues to impact throughout the process since she is an integral part of the study. Such research also often involves prolonged interaction with participants in which building and preserving trust is essential. Any attempt on the part of the researcher to elicit information which the participant is reluctant to reveal may be met with mistrust and reserve. A careful balance between interest and intrusion must be maintained even if it means some topics which the researcher initially deemed important are not explored. Thus, bias is present from the initial stages of the study at the planning stage, during the gathering and interpretation of the data, to, finally, the created narrative. As previously stated, this illustrates that the portrayal of a life created from a life

⁴³⁷ There were fifty in total. Ritchie papers, Personal Documents folder, copy of letter from Ritchie to Kathleen and Frank Callaway, 10 September 2000.

history approach is just one view, which, in this case, shows Ritchie in a generally favourable light and his life as a positive and inspirational journey.

Nonetheless, disputes and disagreements were revealed in this study such as the issues related to the professionalism and appointment of performers for the John Ritchie String Orchestra which led to Dodds's departure, the attempt at forming a Symphony Orchestra which was in part hindered by division amongst the two choral societies and members of the Christchurch Civic Music Council, and the ongoing 'war' between Wellington music circles and Canterbury. Some residue of the latter, which began around the time of Griffiths's headship at the University and which Ritchie inherited by virtue of his relationship with Griffiths and his appointment at Canterbury, still exists.

Arguably related to this conflict, a short but rather bitter quarrel followed a book review by Ritchie in his retirement year. Ritchie's critiquing days were concentrated early in his career; however he received occasional reviewing invitations into the 1970s and 1980s. Not all appraisals were favourable and adverse comments sometimes resulted in a strained relationship between parties. One such judgement which roused the author's ire was Ritchie's review of John Mansfield Thomson's *Into a New Key* which was published in the *Press* in October 1985. Thomson took exception to Ritchie's criticism, in particular a perceived slur that Thomson had shown bias towards Wellington. Thomson wrote firstly to the newspaper's editor who passed the letter on to Ritchie for a response, saying that Thomson's reaction was 'perhaps not entirely unexpected [...]. I'd welcome any comment you'd care to make on his remarks [...]. The Editor will probably give Mr Thomson a personal reply; a little ammunition would be helpful.'

One assumes that the Editor's reply did not resolve the matter for Thomson since a month later Ritchie received a letter directly from Thomson in which he stated that he found the review 'a thoroughly incompetent piece of work [...] [which] failed completely to take into account the terms of the original commission [...] [and] contained innuendoes of a particularly unpleasant kind.' Ritchie duly replied

in which his response to the criticism of his review highlighted the long-standing quarrel between Wellington and Canterbury. To press his point, Ritchie quoted from Thomson's book but from a section unrelated to the matter in hand:

[T]he conflict could be crystallized as centralism versus regionalism; or, Wellington against the rest.' There is no doubt to which side he has taken, and this is understandable. His commissioner is the Music Federation. One of my jobs as reviewer is to consider the objectivity and the fairness of the manner in which the case of either side (or both) may have been presented. I consider my stance to have been justified and moderately presented.⁴³⁸

Still, whatever ill-feeling was had on both sides dissipated over time as within two years Ritchie was suggesting modifications to the text of a new book Thomson was working on: 'I am most grateful for your revisions to the script, all of which I have incorporated'. Perhaps at least as importantly was the gesture which healed any past hostility: 'It was generous of you to write as you did and I am very pleased indeed that our friendship is restored'.

This was not the only time that Ritchie had been one of a party in a long-standing disagreement that was resolved much later when the two parties met in agreement on another matter. A quarrel between Maurice Till and Ritchie forged a divide between the two men for many years before it was healed. In a similar manner to the Thomson dispute, Ritchie had expressed a strong view which he was then unwilling to move from or enter negotiations into when challenged. This occurred while Till was employed at Canterbury and Till was so affected by it that he left Canterbury to take up an offer at the University of Otago. Till later returned to Canterbury and the two men worked together with professionalism although the issue remained unspoken between them. It was only years later during the time of this study in 2010 when the two men met and rallied together against the University's proposal to move the Music Department back into the city that their friendship was fully repaired.

⁴³⁸ Ritchie papers, Private Correspondence.

Ritchie had continued his involvement with a variety of committees both musical and non-musical following the release of his academic responsibilities. He was a co-operative member of the Arts Centre of Christchurch Trust in 1985 and, amongst an array of prominent members was present at the Arts Centre of Christchurch Trust Board Meeting on 21 May 1986 along with P Dunbar (Chairman), H. Holmes, J. Allison, C.F. Doig, G. Gorton, H. Bannerman, M. Hadlee, C.F.S. Caldwell, R. Hawkey, Sir Hamish Hay, D. Donnithorne, and R. Levy. It was from this connection, which was closely related to his previously held higher academic responsibilities at Canterbury, which gave him particular insight and views that aligned with the Heritage Trust and others opposed to the University's proposal, and that Till too was strongly supportive of.

A momentous event for many New Zealanders and certainly a very special occasion for Ritchie was Pope John Paul II's visit to the country, specifically Christchurch on 24 November 1986 during his Papal Tour. This was the first and to date the only visit of the Supreme Pontiff to New Zealand as he travelled to Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Ritchie was recently retired from the university and enjoyed a special role as music director in Christchurch for both an ecumenical service in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament and an outdoor mass at Lancaster Park which followed. The complete score of original works and arrangements by Ritchie comprised *Fanfare: John Paul II* (Ritchie), Polish National Anthem, *Praise my Soul* (Vernon Griffiths) *Gloria* (Andrews), *Responsorial Psalm* (Anthony Ritchie), *Gospel Acclamation* (Ritchie), *Amen, Where there is Charity* (Connolly) *Glory be to Jesus, Ave Verum* (Mozart) and *Now is the Hour*.⁴³⁹

It was a huge undertaking as a thousand choristers including school children from Nelson to Invercargill drawn from around fifty Roman Catholic parishes together with singers from the Musical and Harmonic Societies, the Liedertafel and Cecilian Singers joined together in the number one stand for the sole rehearsal one hour before the arrival of the Pope. Assisting Ritchie on the day were three former

⁴³⁹ Ritchie papers, Papal Visit folder.

students: Anthony Ritchie, Captain Paul Milner and choir conductor Chris Archer.⁴⁴⁰ Much as Ritchie was exceedingly pleased with the musical aspects of the occasion, he was more thrilled at being one of the very few to be greeted by the Pope. As the two men shook hands the Pope spoke briefly to Ritchie, applauding the music he had heard, describing it as ‘wonderful’.



Figure 79: Pope John Paul II and John Ritchie on 24 November 1986. Photo used with permission of the Vatican.

Sadly, invitations to speak at events were not always for happy occasions and as time passed so too did a number of colleagues and friends. On 22 May 1989, Ritchie gave the first of two addresses at the Christchurch Cathedral for the funeral service of Mervyn Waters (1923-1989). As a teacher and band director, Waters and Ritchie’s paths had crossed many times over the years and Ritchie mentioned these particularly in reference to the recital at the opening ceremony of the Town Hall in 1972 and the opening of the 1974 Commonwealth Games.

⁴⁴⁰ Ritchie papers, Macmillan Brown folder, *The Star*, newspaper cutting [n.d.].

Following his passing, Ritchie also received a request from the National Band of New Zealand to compose a chorale in memory of Waters. John Harrison, Executive Director of the Band wrote to Ritchie: 'It is our belief that nobody could undertake this commission better than you and we are very grateful to you for accepting it'.⁴⁴¹ Waters was both a past and current Music Director of the band and had begun preparations for a China and Japan tour later in the year.⁴⁴² *Chorale for Brass Band* in Memoriam of Mervyn Waters was completed soon afterwards. Woolston Brass which honoured Ritchie's role as its patron by regularly performing his works, included the piece together with Ritchie's *Rock of Ages* in their 'St Anne's Celebrity Concert' at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament on 7 November 2001.⁴⁴³

In 1990 Ritchie was elected President of ISME, a role which he held for a two year term until 1992. Ritchie had been associated with the organisation since attending his first and ISME's eighth conference in Dijon in 1968 when Frank Callaway was elected President. Other New Zealanders with a long association with ISME include Heath Lees and John Drummond. Ritchie was friends with many from various parts of the world involved with ISME, and in discussions mentioned the following in particular: Ronald Smith, Jack Dobbs (UK), Robert Werner (USA), Judy Thonell (Australia), Joan Therons (Canada), Egon Kraus (FRG now West Germany) and Dimitri Kabalevsky (USSR). Ritchie was elected to various roles for ISME over many years; board member for two terms from 1972-1976 and again from 1986-1988, Commission Chair of 'Music in General Schools' from 1974-1976, Secretary General from 1976-1984, and, as stated, President from 1990-1992. His long association was subsequently rewarded with

⁴⁴¹ Ritchie papers, Personal Documents folder, letter to Ritchie from the National Bank of New Zealand, 23 May 1989.

⁴⁴² The tour did not take place due to political unrest in China at the time.
'Touring History of National Bands of New Zealand'
<http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b6c7a7_20b9125c13b24be8832baedeb52daf01.pdf>
[accessed 19 July 2019].

⁴⁴³ Ritchie papers, Personal Documents folder. Ritchie was seat sponsor for the Principal B-flat Bass of Woolston Brass: The *Woolstonian*, 47, March 2011, p.6
<http://www.woolstonbrass.org/Woolstonian_PDFs/Woolstonian_47.pdf> [accessed 19 July 2019].

Honorary Life Membership and he continued to attend the organisation's conferences until 2004.

Ritchie continued to accept speaking engagements and in 1991 he delivered a one hour lecture on the development of music in New Zealand to a group of over sixty-year-old Americans who were visiting Christchurch and the University of Canterbury as part of the Elderhostel Programme, The Arts in New Zealand. The suggested title by the programme coordinator, Ann Schrader, 'Developments in New Zealand Music' was altered by Ritchie to 'New Zealand Through Its Music: A profile'. Ritchie's brief for the talk was that it was to be aimed at an informed audience, although not necessarily music specialists, and certainly not with much if any knowledge of New Zealand music. Ritchie took the opportunity to expound the American influence world-wide and how his own experiences during the Second World War, his visit to the States in 1956-1957, and his association with ISME between 1976 and 1990 were just one example of how this was borne out. To keep a captive audience, Ritchie used several musical examples including Lilburn's *Landfall in Unknown Seas*, Pruden's *Harbour Nocturne* and *Dances from Brittany* as well as his own *Turkey in the Straw* and the third movement of his Clarinet Concertino. Additionally he played small excerpts from Chloe Moon's *Shadows* and Anthony Ritchie's *Beginnings*.

Notwithstanding his many commitments and recreational activities spent with family and friends, Ritchie strove to pursue a composing career post-academic retirement as intended and stated at the time and as told to the researcher later: 'My composing life was interrupted by five years' war service and forty years having to earn a living. Now I'm trying to make up for lost time'.⁴⁴⁴ Indeed, Ritchie had a very busy composing period following his retirement from the mid-eighties through to the end of the twentieth century, producing a larger output for the same period compared with any similar time-frame previously. Nonetheless, this period was interspersed with recreational and other commitments and the development of some projects, especially extended orchestral works which he had

⁴⁴⁴ Ritchie papers, Programmes and Personal Documents folders, containing typed programme notes which were then published in the Sonic Circus programme, 31 October 1987.

envisaged, did not take place. This was not surprising, however, considering the number of commissions he continued to receive and compose for, an important factor in Ritchie's output. Ritchie generally wrote music for a purpose knowing that it would be performed, a principle which he had learnt from Griffiths and adopted in his own composing. Ritchie held strong views on contemporary composition produced at universities which received a small academic audience or, in some cases, none at all. Ritchie believed that the likelihood of audience and musician enjoyment was an integral part of the composition process.

Commissions were, by their very nature a manifestation of this view and also reflected the value placed on the composer and his compositions. This approach to composition in terms of commission work satisfied Ritchie's beliefs as well as guaranteeing his financial security but his success in this area may have thwarted his ability to spend more time creatively.

Between 1985 and 1990 Ritchie produced a large number of choral works, with the following completed and performed in 1985 alone: *Prayer for Epiphany*, *O, Breathe On Me*, *Easter Vigil Music* and *Liedertafel*. The latter, a piece for choir, solo trumpet, timpani and piano, was commissioned by the Liedertafel Choir for their Centennial celebrations. Ritchie conducted its first performance as part of the group's celebratory recital on 20 May at the Assemblies of God Church on Tuam Street, Christchurch.⁴⁴⁵ Additionally, several existing works were performed in 1985. In October as part of its contemporary programme, the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament's Choral Mass included Ritchie's *Mass for Congregational Singing (Mass No. 4)*, Vernon Griffiths's *Jesu Grant Me This* together with Ritchie's much loved *Lord, when the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace*. As part of its Motorcorp Sunday Series that same year, the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra performed Ritchie's *Partita for Brass Quintet* in its programme 'Back to Bach'.

⁴⁴⁵ Ritchie papers, Programmes folder.

In December 1987 Ritchie completed *Whimsies* for guitar quite some time after Banks's initial approach to Ritchie in late 1984.⁴⁴⁶ The work was commissioned by Banks with funding from the New Zealand Composers' Association and was to be one of three original New Zealand works that Banks planned to perform for an Australian tour in late 1985. The remaining two composers included Ashley Heenan, who had also accepted the challenge, and Ronald Tremain who later did likewise. The fact that this was new territory for Ritchie did not deter him from enthusiastically accepting the proposal and by the middle of 1985 he had managed, amongst his many other activities, to research guitar writing and draft two movements which he then sent off to Banks for his perusal before completing the third movement.⁴⁴⁷ It seems that Banks was unable to perform these in the timeframe suggested – he suffered from a repetitive strain injury which required complete rest from playing – but remained in discussions with Ritchie into the start of 1987 regarding any technical irregularities which required amendment.

A further work was commissioned by Banks nonetheless and in December of 1987 Ritchie completed *Dreamer* for guitar solo and string quartet. Part of this was later adapted for two guitars, harp and strings and entitled *Two's Company* (1994). Matthew Marshall subsequently performed it with Tony Donaldson in Mexico in 1995 and it is included on Marshall's 2009 CD *Still Life with Guitar*.⁴⁴⁸ The premiere performance of *Whimsies* was ultimately performed by John Mills in 1989 while the publication of the score by Wai-te-ata Press followed two years later.

In early 1986 Ritchie composed *Dominus Firmamentum – The Lord is My Rock*, a composition for choir and organ for the Napier Three Choirs Festival to mark the centennial of the Napier Cathedral.⁴⁴⁹ The first stone of the original building was

⁴⁴⁶ Now Edrick Corban-Banks. 'Students of Aureo Herrero: Edrick Corban-Banks, Guitarist', *Aureo Herrero Association* <<http://www.aureoherrero.org/alumnosedrick.htm>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

⁴⁴⁷ Ritchie papers, Personal Documents folder, letter to Banks, 31 July 1985.

⁴⁴⁸ Matthew Marshall, 'Listen: Still Life With Guitar', *Matthew Marshall* (2019) <<http://matthewmarshallguitar.com/listen/still-life-with-guitar/>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

⁴⁴⁹ Ritchie papers, Macmillan Brown folder, *Press*, 23 April 1986.

laid in 1886 and the building completed in 1888 but the Cathedral was destroyed in the 1931 Napier earthquake.⁴⁵⁰ Ritchie made full use of this catastrophic event in the biblical anthem, utilising metaphor when he chose the text from Psalm 18 as a basis in the composition to symbolise the destruction of the cathedral and the subsequent emerging of the new building. The work, which was commissioned by the Church's Dean and Choir was premiered on 26 April at Napier by the Napier, Auckland and Wellington Cathedral choirs, and performed again in October in Wellington under the direction of Peter Godfrey. The only New Zealand offering in the concert, it was the first item after the programme's interval.

To celebrate the fiftieth Jubilee of the RNZAF in 1987, a new work was commissioned by the RNZAF with assistance from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council and the New Zealand Composers' Foundation. The cantata *Wings of the Morning* for choir and military band with solo tenor, concert band and choir was premiered by the Orpheus Choir and RNZAF Band with tenor Philip Hornblow in the Wellington Town Hall on Saturday the 10th of October. The title was derived from verse 9 of Psalm 138 in the King James *Bible* (both verse 9 and 10 are set in full) while text from the Old Testament book of Ezekiel was used for the chorus. To Ritchie these words 'quite remarkably seem to assume the existence of flying machines [particularly the end passage]...the wheels were lifted up...' while the setting of a sonnet penned by nineteen year old Canadian spitfire pilot, John Gillespie Magee, who was killed in 1941 within a few weeks of writing the poem was scored for the extended tenor solo in the middle section. Due to his own experiences as a pilot, Ritchie was able to attest that the text captured 'the youthful exultation of airborne life, alone in a small cockpit'.⁴⁵¹

Three weeks later the work was included in the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra's presentation of the Sonic Circus, a twelve hour gala of New Zealand music in Wellington which Jack Body coordinated. According to a brief letter

⁴⁵⁰ 'History of the Cathedral', *Waiapu Cathedral, St John The Evangelist*
<<https://www.napiercathedral.org.nz/history.php>> [accessed 15 July 2019].

⁴⁵¹ Ritchie papers, *Wings of the Morning* folder; contains notes, correspondence, and programmes relating to the work.

from Body to Ritchie in November of that same year the work was well received and he hoped to be able to provide Ritchie with audio cassette recordings of the Circus in due course to go with the enclosed programme. The work was performed again several years later in 1993 by the Central Band of the Royal New Zealand Air Force with the Christchurch City Choir at the Christchurch Town Hall for the Sixth Anniversary of the Royal New Zealand Air Force Museum – with addition of parts for a newly acquired contrabass clarinet and bass saxophone – and for the Band’s 2004 concert tour in Christchurch, Timaru, Alexandra and Dunedin. The 2004 Christchurch performance in the Aurora Centre on 25 February was complimentarily reviewed: ‘A thoughtful and readily assimilated work’.⁴⁵² A repeat performance by the Orpheus Choir and Central Band of the RNZAF also in 2004 was similarly well-received: ‘Still worthy and rewarding, even after seventeen years. John Ritchie’s piece did indeed prove worth hearing again’.⁴⁵³

A commitment by Ritchie to complete the overture *Papanui Road* on his retirement was fulfilled in 1987. The first performance of the work took place in the Christchurch Town Hall by the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra. The overture was the opening piece of the programme which was the orchestra’s final subscription concert series of the year. It was played soon afterwards in early 1988 when the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra with conductor William Southgate toured the country for the International Business Machines (IBM) Summer Pops.⁴⁵⁴ Performing at twelve centres, the Christchurch concert which opened with the work took place on Saturday, 9 February, also in the city’s Town Hall. Unlike Ritchie’s experience of reviewers voiced a few years previously, critic Paul Goodson identified the work and performance as separate entities, critiquing firstly the work and then the performance. Of the former he noted that it

⁴⁵² Ritchie papers, Correspondence, letters from 19 January to 22 March 1993 between Ritchie and Royal New Zealand Air Force Squadron Leader and Director of Music, G.H. Hanify; Ritchie papers, Loose Newspaper Cuttings folder; *Press* 1 March 2004.

⁴⁵³ Ritchie papers, Loose Newspaper Cuttings folder; Lindis Taylor, *Evening Post*, 11 August 2004.

⁴⁵⁴ Ritchie papers, Macmillan Brown folder; ‘New Zealand Symphony Orchestra: Concert programmes and related ephemera, 1988, folder 1, January-May 1988’ in *National Library of New Zealand* <<https://natlib.govt.nz/records/31985750>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

was 'extremely well crafted with not one superfluous note. It is an engaging, warm-hearted piece: astringent without being coarse and brimming with quirky melodicism that never becomes flaccid or self-indulgent'. The following year *Papanui Road* opened The Festival of Japan which took place from 8 to 14 July. The work was performed by the Christchurch Youth Orchestra and conducted by Paul Mayhew.

The Christchurch Symphony Orchestra performed yet another new Ritchie work on 7 May 1988. *Choral Flourish* was written and performed to open the Orchestra's third Autumn Series Subscription concert at the Town Hall Auditorium. The piece was a tribute to Robert Field-Dodgson (1926-1999) and a celebration of his forty year contribution as director of the Royal Christchurch Musical Society. Further commissions were undertaken; the New Zealand Army Band celebrated its twenty-five year jubilee in Christchurch with a concert in the Christchurch Town Hall on 23 July. Amongst the photographs and articles of the glossy Jubilee Year brochure, was a feature on Ritchie and his new work commissioned for the event, *NZAB 25*. The work which the composer described as 'Partly a fanfare and partly a march' made musical reference to both the New Zealand and Singapore national anthems signifying the Band's principal operating bases in the two countries at Burnham and Sembawang respectively. Ritchie utilised the rhythm of the morse code sounds which followed the opening fanfare to create 'a hymn-tune version of both countries anthems'. This musical idea was then interspersed with the fanfare's development. Confirming Ritchie's skill in writing for specific occasions and his exceptional ability as a performer's composer, Phillip Norman reviewed the work favourably, saying that the composition 'with its skilled fanfare writing, smooth dovetailing of diverse themes and unmistakeable celebratory mood provided an admirable showcase for the band's instrumental talents'.

Vocal fare predominated in 1990 with the completion of four works including the song *Praise* in January. Written for the Hagley Singers and its director Rosemary Turnbull, the piece was composed for the opening of a new exhibition 'A Canterbury Perspective' at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. The work was

performed in February in the presence of several dignitaries including the then Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer who opened the exhibition. Another work which became part of the repertoire was the song cycle *Winter and Rough Weather* which was completed in May 1988 for the Upper Hutt Choral Society and its conductor Alwyn Palmer. It received its premiere broadcast a few years later in February 1991.⁴⁵⁵ A further well-known work, Ritchie's arrangement of *Turkey in the Straw*, was included in a NZSO Family Fun Concert Series of 1990-1991. It was performed under the baton of Canadian conductor Mario Duschenes on 26 May 1990.⁴⁵⁶ In 1992 Ritchie was approached by Judy Bellingham with a view to securing a commission for him to compose a twenty to twenty-five minute song-cycle for soprano and piano, an idea which had been discussed between them previously. The funds were subsequently made available through a joint equal grant from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand and the New Zealand Composers' Foundation. *Mary Magdalene Songs* with words from Boris Pasternek's *Doctor Zhivago* was subsequently premiered in Christchurch in 1993 and later performed in Russia and England by Bellingham.⁴⁵⁷

1991 also marked two important anniversaries: it was fifty years since the Christchurch Music Civic Council was formed, and the University celebrated the centenary of teaching music at Canterbury. In honour of the former, Ritchie composed *Psalm 150* for Chorus and Brass Band which was completed in October of 1990. This was performed by the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra and New Zealand Army Band for the opening and closing of the National Concerto Finals at the Town Hall Auditorium on 16 March to an appreciative audience. Ian Dando in reviewing the work for the *Star* commented that Ritchie 'produced a fitting and tasteful piece of ceremonial occasional writing' while Timothy Jones of the *Press* deemed it 'perfectly approachable and yet relied for effect as much on cunning rhythms and skilful part writing as on the over-all impact of a massed choir with exuberant brass accompaniment'. A commemorative service also took place for

⁴⁵⁵ Ritchie papers, Macmillan Brown folder.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Anthony Ritchie was similarly commissioned. His work *Berlin Fragments* with words by New Zealand poet Cilla McQueen was first performed in Dunedin in 1994.

the Civic Council's anniversary on 7 July in the Christchurch Cathedral. Ritchie and Griffiths both featured in the service's musical fare; Griffiths's arrangement of the Hymn *Praise, my soul* was sung while Ritchie's *Threnody* was performed by the Skellerup Woolston Brass Band. Ritchie was also amongst a group of former and current members of the council who gave a reading during the proceedings.

The University's music teaching centenary was bittersweet for Ritchie. He had enjoyed a successful and fulfilling career at the institution and had contributed enormously to the development and fostering of music in the wider community. He was at the centre of the city's musical world at a certain period in time and rose to the top of the music department – and very nearly the University. He was innovative in his objectives, initiating the employment of resident ensembles at the University and founding the John Ritchie String Orchestra. Both were new territory in Canterbury but not experimental. So, while he remained true to his own musical and pedagogical principles, Ritchie led the department forward in line with its traditions and original aims. The centennial event was commemorated in several ways, not least by the publication of staff member John Jennings's book *Music at Canterbury* which details the background and beginnings of music at the University. As outlined, classes at Canterbury began on a trial basis when Cathedral Organist and choir master George F. Tendall was appointed lecturer in February 1891 for one year. The volume presents a chronological history of music at the University in five sections, each representing an era bound by a specific head of music, together with appendices of enrolment numbers, staff appointments, a Roll of Graduates in Music, and postgraduate research degrees.

By 1982, under direction from the university administration, the system to date which had seen appointed Professors make all decisions related to their respective department was replaced by one of consultation. The appointed Head was required under the team management model to confer with its academic staff on every decision relating to staffing, funding, teaching, assessment and curriculum. Music was, in fact, one of the last to accede. This may have been because of Ritchie's seniority in administration and his unwillingness to accept such a change

in procedure; he certainly did not agree with this style of working. Eventually he accepted the inevitable and relinquished his role as Head of the Department while remaining on the staff as Professor for a further five years. Still, in 1982, he believed that the department, if they had the will, could have appointed a new Professor and Head of Department who would have operated in the existing style. Ritchie believed that a department needed one strong-minded, intelligent individual who could be objective, make unpopular decisions knowing they were for the better good, and weather the storm. He discussed matters with his colleagues and granted them the ability to exercise their own judgement in relation to their area of expertise, but in administrative matters was confident and sure of his mind once a decision had been made.⁴⁵⁸ That may be perceived as dogmatic and autocratic today but whether his style was markedly different to other department heads is not known. Certainly Hawkey had faith in Ritchie's ability as Head and Professor and was very happy to bow to his expertise. Those who came later were perhaps less easy with this style, wanting instead to have input and influence in the department's direction.

Following his resignation in 1982, Ritchie was irritated by what he perceived as the 'dilly dallying about' which staff exhibited, leaving it so long to decide on an appointment that the administration intervened. An existing staff member was subsequently appointed Head with the expectation that a rotational system would continue to operate henceforth. Eventually Ritchie, in resignation, took a back seat in discussions in the department, recognising that he was unable to have any real influence and because his outlook was vastly different to his fellow colleagues. His stance did not change from that point on and he remained to the end certain of his conviction and believing that the department's current (poor) state was due to this change in process.⁴⁵⁹ In Griffiths, in his military career, in music both within the music department and performance organisations, Ritchie had observed and become part of a solitary leadership model whereby the leader was both an expert

⁴⁵⁸ Maurice Till, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 10 February 2010), recording and transcript held by the author.

⁴⁵⁹ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 2007.

in the field and possessed qualities of command. It was unimaginable to Ritchie that individuals without experience or training in both areas would be granted governance either singly or in a collaborative group. To this end, it transpired that Ritchie who oversaw the beginning of these changes in the early 1980s was the last of the old style leaders. Perhaps because of this and his enduring influence of music in Canterbury, Ritchie gave the address at the launch of Jennings's book and the hundred year's anniversary celebration of the first music class in the department's recital room 205 on 28 November 1991.

While it was now more than a decade since Ritchie had retired from his academic post at Canterbury, he maintained his connection with the University through colleagues and friends. In the middle of 1997 Ritchie was asked by the institution if he would accept a composing commission for a ceremonial piece to be played on the new (1996) Christchurch Town Hall organ at the end of the University's graduation ceremonies. *Mace and Academicals* was duly completed and first performed at the graduation ceremony on 17 December of that year. The following year yet another special anniversary close to Ritchie's heart took place. It was the fiftieth year since the birth of the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra and to celebrate this event Kiwi-Pacific Records published an anniversary CD titled *Alex Lindsay String Orchestra* in August 1998. Featuring only New Zealand music, included on the CD was a remastered edition of Ritchie's *Clarinet Concertino* performed by Frank Gurr. Ritchie received a complimentary copy from the record company with a note expressing their satisfaction with the music. Bearing in mind the length of time since the original recording, the company considered that it sounded remarkably fresh. The letter's author, Janey MacKenzie, added a postscript to say that she had enjoyed singing Ritchie's *Kyrie and Gloria* with the Palmerston North Choral Society earlier in the month.

Ritchie had composed just three concertos or concertinos over his lifetime; the highly regarded and regularly performed *Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra*, the less successful and seldom played *Concertino for Piano and String Orchestra* (both 1958), and the more recent *Pisces, Partita Concertante for Solo Violin and Orchestra* (1984). The opportunity to compose a feature work for

saxophone arose and he set to work on his fourth and last concerto utilising the same fingerprint technique demonstrated in the clarinet and violin concertos, the ritornello.⁴⁶⁰ The three-movement *Concerto for Saxophone in E flat and Small Orchestra*, dedicated to Debbie Rawson, was completed in May 1998. Rawson, a University of Canterbury graduate, was familiar with Ritchie's work having previously performed his clarinet concertino, firstly the middle Andante movement only for The Island Bay Festival in 1995, and then the complete work in 1996.⁴⁶¹ On 5 June 1998 just a few weeks after its completion, Rawson performed Ritchie's *Saxophone Concerto* for its world premiere in a lunchtime concert at the Massey Concert Hall with the Wellington Conservatorium Chamber Orchestra and guest conductor Graham Hanify. The work has since been performed a number of times by Rawson and others: Rawson on 1 April 2000 with the Wellington Chamber Orchestra conducted by Donald Maurice; Rawson with the Manukau City Symphony Orchestra and conductor Uwe Grodd on 27 May 2006; soloist Simon Brew and the Hutt Valley Orchestra for the first concert with then new conductor Brent Stewart (and second on the programme to Lilburn's *Drysdale Overture*) on 18 May 2007; and on 11 August 2012 the Kāpiti Concert Orchestra conducted by Justus Rozemond with soloist Reuben Chin.

In 2000 at age seventy-nine Ritchie deemed the time was right to put aside his manuscript paper and while the composing pen was not completely laid to rest, it was certainly picked up less from that time onwards. Ritchie began instead to concentrate on securing some permanency for his existing works. Much of his music had been regularly aired and performed and continued to do so well into the twenty-first century. In light of a number of recordings which had been made by the Radio New Zealand classical music network Concert FM in order to broadcast

⁴⁶⁰ John Ritchie, *Interview*, 17 September 2007.

⁴⁶¹ Rawson performed Andante from the Clarinet Concertino with the Island Bay Festival Orchestra conducted by Gary Wilby on 12 February 1995 at Wellington South Baptist Church and later the complete work at Wesley Church, Taranaki Street, Wellington on 1 December 1996 with the Wellington Chamber Orchestra conducted by Kenneth Young. A curiosity is that a group photograph of Debbie Rawson, Gary Wilby and cellist and General Manager of Wellington Sinfonia, Brian Budd, published together with an article in advance of the Island Bay Festival Concert in *City Voice* on 9 February 1995 was taken by David Gurr, son of Frank Gurr, clarinettist and past teacher of Rawson. (Ritchie papers, Correspondence. Letter from Wilby to Ritchie, 3 March 1995).

his works, Ritchie decided it would be timely for the production of a CD of these. While he was in the process of corresponding with Concert FM on this matter, a similar proposal from the recently established (1995) HRL Morrison Music Trust was made, initiated by Donald Armstrong from the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra.⁴⁶² Over the next year or so this plan came to fruition and on 24 October 2002, the CD *Aquarius – Music by John Ritchie* (MMT 2040) together with *Diedre Irons – Piano Recital* was launched. The event, which was hosted by the University of Canterbury in the Dining Room, Registry building, was attended by the Morrison Trust's founder, Lloyd Morrison, (1957-2011) and its Executive Producer, Ross Hendry.

The music, performed by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra, comprised Ritchie's string and full orchestral works; the *Clarinet Concertino*, the two suites and *Papanui Road*. The CD was subsequently reviewed by Rod Biss, Martin Setchell and Ian Dando.⁴⁶³ Biss characterised Ritchie's music as 'wholeheartedly professional' and marvelled on hearing Ritchie's well-known Clarinet Concertino performed by Marina Sturm with the NZSO Chamber Orchestra under Donald Armstrong's direction, considering it to be 'a much more exciting piece than we thought, packed with felicities of rhythm, scoring and jazzy twists that sound as fresh as ever'.

The suites were similarly well-received, with the title track *Aquarius* being hailed as particularly fine and epitomising Ritchie's success at combining profundity with accessibility. *Papanui Road*, the latest work, was less well-regarded by Biss who considered that 'its whimsy and nostalgia wear less well' although Setchell thought otherwise, appreciating the tone poem's ebullience, and applauding Ritchie's artistry and ability to reach his audience. Dando believed that Ritchie chose not to follow others into post-war avant-garde and instead achieved 'renewal in traditional non-élitist writing that anyone can grasp on first hearing [...], the inventive variations springing from the clear-cut opening ideas [of Aquarius Suite No. 2] are easy to follow [...] [but] Ritchie is never bland or

⁴⁶² Ritchie papers, Letters folder; letter from Janey MacKenzie, Morrison Music Trust, to Ritchie, 1 October, 2001.

⁴⁶³ Ritchie papers, Post 2000 folder, loose newspaper cutting, *Listener*, 10 May 2003.

predictable.’ Further ‘The performances warmly capture Ritchie’s genial unpretentiousness, all with excellent recording quality and a finely written booklet’.

Dando’s comments are exactly those which Ritchie would have identified with. Firstly, he was frustrated by the apparent discarding, within academia in particular, of music compositional techniques which were founded in tonality and originated from traditional German and English teachings with a long developmental history. He was not against musical development; rather his idea of it differed from others. The concept of using atonality or non-musical techniques such as twelve tone serialism to produce meaningful creations was the antithesis to his training and views. Additionally, he thought that music should be complex enough to challenge advanced listeners but contain elements which could be understood by less knowledgeable audience members. It was Ritchie’s ability to compose music like this that gave many of his works their distinctive quality and invited repeat performances and airings.

Coinciding with the release of the CD was interest from Promethean Editions to publish scores of Ritchie’s music. The two versions of *The Snow Goose* for solo flute and orchestra (1982), and solo flute and piano (1999) were duly published in late 2002. Several more followed over the next few years including *Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra* (1958), *Suite No. 1* (1956), *Aquarius: Suite No. 2* (1982), *String Quartet* (1962), *Pisces: Partita Concertante* (1984-1985), *Three Pieces for Polly* (2004) and *Papanui Road* (1987).

Also by 2000 the next generation of composers such as Phillip Norman was providing much of the required music in Canterbury but Ritchie’s skill was still in demand and he continued to write for community organisations. He completed an arrangement of *O Quam Amabilis* for recorders and organ which the Recorder Ensemble performed at the 2003 Christchurch Schools’ Music Festival. Of the work, conductor Genevieve (Genny) Long wrote to Ritchie: ‘There has been much acclaim for your beautiful arrangement [...]. My fellow Cecilians were especially complimentary’.

Revisions were made for the Samuel Marsden *Overture* (1978) in time for the Collegiate School's one hundred and twenty-fifth centennial celebrations in 2003. Although the request had been received shortly before Anita's passing in late 2001, by February of 2002 correspondence between the two parties indicate Ritchie's acquiescence to re-write the work for the now more advanced musicians at the school than those in 1978.⁴⁶⁴ The school's Director of Music, Roy Tankersley, was delighted with the resulting score and Ritchie, accompanied by Margaret Nielsen, attended as guest of honour at the celebration concert on 5 May 2003.

⁴⁶⁴ Ritchie papers, Marsden: An Overture folder.

Chapter 9: The Final Years

Reflection and Preparation for Posterity

As the twenty-first century approached and Ritchie entered his twilight years, milestones were reached and musicians and others associated with Ritchie were keen to honour his achievements with performances. Amongst these activities was a forty year commemorative concert for the John Ritchie String Orchestra organised by cellist Ellen Doyle. Several past players came together to perform for the programme including Audrey Harris, Nan Armstrong, Lois Bognuda and John Dodds.

Canterbury's founding, signalled by the arrival of the first four European ships to the region in December 1850, also foreshadowed the beginning of Western music in the region. The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary programme was widespread and included a variety of art and garden exhibitions, performances and special events. Music was commemorated with the Canterbury Sesquicentenary Music Festival held in the Town Hall Auditorium over two weeks from 9 to 23 March in 2000. The official opening recital on the evening of 10 March featured several New Zealand notable works and arrangements of the time including Griffiths's *Cantate Domino* and Ritchie's *Concertino for Clarinet and Strings*. The latter was conducted by Mark Hodgkinson with Mark Walton on clarinet and was recorded by Concert FM for a later broadcast.

On 29 June 2001, Professor Neville Phillips (1916-2001) passed away in his adopted Canterbury, Kent in the United Kingdom where he had moved to with his wife, Pauline, in 1978 following his retirement from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. Ritchie and Phillips had kept in touch over the years and after his death Pauline and Ritchie maintained regular contact. On 11 July 2001, a memorial gathering for friends and colleagues of Phillips took place at the University Staff Club at which Ritchie gave tribute to a gentleman whom he had worked with and under during Phillips's eleven years as Vice-Chancellor. Reflecting back on a man whom Ritchie had had a long association, he

acknowledged the parallels of his and Phillips's lives. Both men's lives had been disrupted by the Second World War; both had, for financial reasons, been part-time students; both had been appointed at Canterbury in 1946; both had been assigned rooms in the West Block near the Great Hall and Library; and regardless of any difficulties arising as they set out on their academic careers, were most grateful for the opportunity of 'earning the lowest salary on our respective pay scales'.⁴⁶⁵

A special programme titled 'A concert of music by Professor John Ritchie to mark his 80th birthday' took place later that year on the afternoon of Sunday, 30 September 2001. *Intrada and Tarantella*, *Sweet and Sour*, *The Lamb from Songs of Innocence*, *Prayer for Poverty*, *Be thou O King*, *Three Caricatures for Piano*, *Praise*, a setting of *Psalm 150*, *A quam amabilis*, *Canary wine*, song cycle and *Welcome, Sir Christmas* were all performed by a variety of past and present colleagues and students: Diedre Irons, David Kelly, Margaret Nielsen (piano), Anthony Ferner (flute), Sue Braddfvedt, Alys Cordeaus, Andrea Corner (soprano), and the Cecilian Singers directed by Nan Anderson with accompanist Lea Henderson. Several accolades were given to Ritchie who was in attendance accompanied by his family.

It was a significant event for the Ritchie family as they united together for the occasion, not least because of Anita's health; it was just two months before her passing. Due to the nature of the concert and the size of the venue, the event was by invitation only; however the University's current music students were also encouraged to attend.⁴⁶⁶ The venue was quickly filled and extra chairs placed at the back to accommodate as many as possible. It was apparent that the musicians enjoyed performing Ritchie's work enormously. The speakers too, a mix of performers, friends and colleagues, spoke of him with high regard and appreciation for his life's work which was clearly gratifying for Ritchie. Many

⁴⁶⁵ Ritchie papers, Talks folder, speech notes, p.2.

⁴⁶⁶ This researcher, as a current music student, was able to attend the recital but was seated at the back with her sleeping six month old baby in her pram in case a quick exit was needed. Fortunately this was not needed and she was able to enjoy the full programme from start to finish uninterrupted.

were keen to speak to him at the conclusion of the concert, and while he may have wanted to just relax with family and close friends, he greeted all with his usual conviviality and graciousness, allowing himself a little time with each.

Additional acknowledgements of his eightieth included the broadcast of an interview with him conducted by Heath Lees on Concert FM while The Jubilate Singers also recognised his contribution and continuing patronage by performing fifteen of his Christmas Carols at Christchurch Cathedral on 1 December.⁴⁶⁷ The ensuing *Press* review by Timothy Jones, who considered that the pieces ‘had the most marvellous fluency...amazingly varied...with every mood and emotion’, was eminently pleasing to Ritchie.⁴⁶⁸ Fourteen of the carols were subsequently published by Bellbird Publications.

Ritchie’s last major work was commissioned by Woolston Brass with funding from Creative New Zealand in late 2004 as a means of commemorating ninety years since the first Anzac Day in 1916. *Gallipoli Voices* for Brass Band, Chorus and Speaker was accomplished in February, 2006 but its progress and completion – the deadline of which was extended – was not without its challenges for the composer. He spent a considerable amount of time researching and reading a variety of war-related texts including diaries of servicemen before deciding on the texts and how they would be utilised in the piece.

Part way through his work on the composition, Ritchie’s health, his personal views on such a celebration of ‘a shocking failure of decision-making and organisation causing a criminal loss of New Zealand lives’, and difficulties negotiating fees and permission to use some of the selected words in the music caused Ritchie to reflect on whether he could in fact finalise the composition.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁷ Ritchie papers, Recordings. An audio recording of the interview was subsequently sent to Ritchie in CD format.

⁴⁶⁸ Ritchie papers, Post 2000 folder, loose cutting, *Press*, 3 December 2001.

⁴⁶⁹ Ritchie papers, Personal documents folder, copy of letter from Ritchie to Creative New Zealand, 18 October 2005.

Such an event would have been the first ever occurrence for Ritchie.⁴⁷⁰ By October 2005, however, he recommenced work on the project with renewed energy and completed it in February 2006, dedicating it to Woolston Brass and its Director, David Gallaher. Indeed his pessimism over such a commemoration appeared to wane considerably over time since by May 2006 he was considering composing a similar work on New Zealand's participation at Passchendaele.⁴⁷¹

At the time of the work's completion, Gallaher had been the director of Woolston Brass for ten years. To Gallaher, Ritchie was an excellent patron who took an active interest in the group's activities and was highly thought of by its members. He would often call in to give encouragement during rehearsals and attend the band's concerts: 'There's never any doubt at the annual meeting who the patron is'. The band had performed Ritchie's works previously and Gallaher had enjoyed recording Ritchie's *Flourish for an Occasion* and *Threnody* for inclusion in a CD of New Zealand works, Woolston Brass: *Millenium*, in 1998. Gallaher believed Ritchie's particular skill in composing was that he understood the range and texture of the instruments and knew each instrument's unique qualities. He was also well versed in the use of the mute. Gallaher was aware that some composers did not write so well for brass band because they thought of the instruments as a homogenous group.

Gallaher clearly recalled the difficulty Ritchie had in completing this commission. It seemed that Ritchie was the obvious choice to compose the work, in part because of his connection with the band, but particularly due to his association with the war; nonetheless Gallaher wondered if they were a year or two too late with the commission. Indeed, Ritchie was so dissatisfied with his first attempt that he tore it up in disgust and the work was delayed. While Ritchie was exceedingly irritated with himself by these events, both the band and the funding organisation, Creative New Zealand, were understanding and prepared for the work to be held over until the following year.

⁴⁷⁰ Ritchie papers, Letters folder, copy of letter from Ritchie to Creative New Zealand, 4 May 2006.

⁴⁷¹ Ritchie papers, Personal folder, copy of letter from Ritchie to Leanne Dalziel, 4 May 2006.

The premiere performance of *Gallipoli Voices* took place on 25 April 2006 during Anzac Day Commemorations for the ANZAC Salute concert at the Christchurch Town Hall by the New Zealand Community Trust. Perhaps unusually, it was Gallaher, (at Ritchie's request) rather than Brian Law, the city choir's conductor, who conducted the work. The performers were the Woolston Brass, the Christchurch City Choir and the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra with soloist Chris Bruerton and Paul van Uden as the narrator. Ritchie was reasonably pleased with the result but made some revisions before it was performed the following year in another ANZAC Salute programme, and this time it was Ritchie who provided the narration.

Ritchie's works continued to be regularly performed throughout his long retirement. His choral and voice works were popular choices in recitals.



Figure 80: Programme for New Zealand Sounds recital in London, 1990. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

A few selected examples include *Pray for Peace, So Sweet is She* (Hagley Singers) and the *Four Zhivago Songs* (1990 New Zealand Sounds concert in London with Margaret Lion on piano and mezzo-soprano Marion Olsen), while the Harmonic Chorale sang the ever popular *Lord, when the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace* in an afternoon programme of New Zealand music and poetry in September 1990. The Timaru District Choir presented a programme of 'Music by New Zealand Composers' on 27 May 2007 in which they also performed *Lord, when the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace* along with works by Griffiths, Lilburn, David Hamilton, Philip Norman and Dorothy Buchanan. The appreciation of this particular song was further expressed when the New Zealand Graduate Choir included it in their programme in September the following year.

Ritchie's refusal of a Queen's honour on his retirement was not an indication of his general attitude to awards, and he was happy to accept recognition for duties which he considered were undertaken outside the normal part of his working life. He continued to be remembered for his many services and was always gracious when accolades were bestowed on him. Although he was a practising and committed Catholic, his goodwill extended well beyond the bounds of a single religious group and hence was delighted to accept the presentation of 'The Salvation Army Red Shield Club' on 10 September 2007 in acknowledgement of his contribution to the club.

In 2006 Ritchie was presented with a Christchurch Civic Award in a ceremony by the then mayor, Garry Moore. City Councillor, David Cox, who also participated in various organisations including as Chairman of the Music Centre of Christchurch and board member of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, was away at the time but penned a letter to Ritchie in acknowledgement of his contribution to a 'Better Christchurch' noting that 'the enlarged Christchurch is the better for having you in our midst'.⁴⁷² The framed certificate hung proudly in Ritchie's house from that time onwards.

⁴⁷² Ritchie papers, Personal documents folder, letter from Cox to Ritchie, 14 December 2006.



CIVIC AWARD

AWARDED TO

John Ritchie

IN RECOGNITION OF

Services to the Community

Amy Wilson
MAYOR OF CHRISTCHURCH



2006

Figure 81: Civic Award presented to John Richie in 2006.
Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

Further, between 2005 and 2008 an application was made and granted for a Certificate of Appreciation for Ritchie's service to New Zealand during World War Two.⁴⁷³



Figure 82: World War Two Certificate of Appreciation for service given. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

⁴⁷³ Ritchie papers. The certificate is not dated, but the signatories, the Rt Hon. Helen Clark and Hon. Rick Barker provide clues since Barker was only Minister of Veterans' Affairs between 2005 and 2008 after which Labour was defeated.

Music organisations too were naturally keen to recognise Ritchie's endeavours. The Christchurch based chamber orchestra L'estro Armonico Strings with soloist Oleg Kotorovych presented a recital in the Great Hall on 23 October of the same year. Conducted by Tony Ferner, the programme of twentieth-century works including Britten's (1913-1976) *Sinfonietta*, Op. 1 and Vladimir Marthynov's (b. 1946) *Come In*, a work for strings and two violins, opened with Ritchie's *Suite No. 1 for String Orchestra*. Additionally, the Christchurch Youth Orchestra performed Ritchie's *Partita Concertante* ('Pisces') during its final concert for the year on Saturday, 10 November.

The years 2007 and 2008 marked significant anniversaries: the thirtieth anniversary of the Bradshaw organ at Canterbury as previously mentioned and the centenary of Christchurch's Music Centre Chapel in Barbadoes Street (2007) where Ritchie's eightieth birthday concert had been held and which was, in 2009, renamed the Maurice Till Concert Hall. Alas, this was later badly damaged in the Canterbury earthquakes and subsequently demolished. Additionally in 2008, it was fifty years since the founding of the John Ritchie String Orchestra which foreshadowed the establishment of a full symphony orchestra for the city.

It was in 2007 that the current University's Vice-Chancellor, Roy Sharp, made a concerted effort to initiate moving the Music Department back to the University's original home at the Christchurch Arts Centre. The Centre was keen to redevelop an area on its Hereford Street frontage site by placing the existing car park underground and building a large building at ground level above. Both the Court Theatre, resident on the site since 1976 until the Christchurch earthquakes, and the University had put forward proposals to partner with the Arts Centre for the use of the building. Ritchie had a special interest in this discussion both as a previous Professor of Music at Canterbury and through his past association with the Arts Centre Trust. He had intimate knowledge of the Trust's stated objectives which those in opposition to the proposal, in particular the *Save Our Arts Centre* (SOAC)

organisation, believed would be violated if the plan proceeded.⁴⁷⁴ In fact, although the decision to donate buildings to the City as an arts centre was announced during the University's Centenary celebrations in 1973, it wasn't until 1977 that the details were ratified.⁴⁷⁵ This was just after the University's move to Ilam was finally completed and, significantly, Ritchie was Acting Vice-Chancellor. Thus, he was also on the Executive Committee of Council which decided on the formulation of the Trust along with arrangements for the University's donation of the land and buildings to Christchurch. The time had arrived for Ritchie and Maurice Till to put past differences behind them as they joined a number of other individuals and parties who, for a variety of reasons, were strongly opposed to the Christchurch City Council's proposal to fund a new building for the use of the University of Canterbury at the Arts Centre.

In October 2009, during a three-day hearing of many oral submissions, both for and against, Ritchie and Till stood together against the proposal to re-locate the Music Department back to its original home at the Arts Centre Site. Ritchie was one member of a large group of over forty individuals with like views represented by spokesperson Malcolm Douglass. Notwithstanding, permission was granted by the commissioners for Ritchie to deliver his own argument which he duly did on 20 October. In June the following year it was announced that resource consent for the building had been declined on heritage grounds.

This was not quite the end of the saga for Ritchie. The University had stated that in the event the proposal on the City site could not proceed, its default position for music was to build at Ilam; however by 2010 Ritchie understood from various sources that the University was showing interest in another city site. A signed letter by Ritchie and Till outlining their concerns and dismay at this possibility

⁴⁷⁴ Ritchie papers, Arts Centre folder. Peat Marwick, *The Arts Centre of Christchurch Trust: Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1985* records three objectives: 1. To hold trust property as a cultural centre for use by the people of Christchurch and elsewhere; 2. To foster, promote, facilitate and encourage the interests of art, culture, education and other related interests, in particular through the provision of accommodation for such activities; 3. To preserve and maintain the existing stone buildings on the arts centre.

⁴⁷⁵ 'History and Chronology', *University of Canterbury*
<<https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about/history/chronology/>> [accessed 19 July 2019].

was duly sent to the Vice-Chancellor, Rod Carr, in August of that year. Carr responded ten days later, reiterating the University's original position which was to remain at Ilam if the Arts Centre proposal did not proceed and to note that this was confirmed in a printed media report on 5 August 2010.⁴⁷⁶ Whatever rumours were gathering to the contrary, it appeared these were unfounded and an acknowledgement with thanks from the two older men appeared to have been the last word on the matter, at least during Ritchie's lifetime.⁴⁷⁷

Anniversary celebrations for the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra began in early 2008. The anniversary date was based on the John Ritchie String Orchestra founding although this was problematic for Ritchie who pointed out that the inception of the John Ritchie String Orchestra was in late 1958 while its first concert took place in early 1959. The Christchurch Civic Chamber Orchestra was formed within two years of this time followed by the Christchurch Civic Orchestra in 1962 but all three orchestras remained separate entities under the direction and management of Ritchie.⁴⁷⁸

To Ritchie, this created a conundrum as to the accuracy of the date of Christchurch Symphony Orchestra's anniversary. Ritchie pointed this out to the orchestra's conductor, William Southgate, in response to a letter from Southgate inquiring as to some details of the original orchestra. Notwithstanding that further discussions were had between the two parties, the timing of the anniversary concerts remained unchanged and programmes devised. While this was obviously the end of the matter for Southgate and the orchestra, Ritchie remained privately somewhat unhappy with its stance. He expressed his disagreement with it on several occasions during the study's interviews although he maintained civil and friendly relationships with those involved. It was yet another example of a man who was sure of his mind but in this instance, did not let his personal feelings stand in the way of the greater good: the success of the anniversary celebrations. It

⁴⁷⁶ Ritchie papers, newspaper cutting: 'Plans for campus of future unveiled', *Press*, 20 August 2010.

⁴⁷⁷ In 2017 part of the University of Canterbury's Classics and Music Departments moved to the restored Chemistry Building at the Arts Centre.

⁴⁷⁸ Ritchie papers, Personal Documents folder. Fax, 1 February 2007.

is worth noting that the views expressed would not have been made under any other circumstances beyond the original letter to Southgate, except in private conversation to close family and friends.

Ritchie's musical contribution to the city was honoured at both the Chapel's and Christchurch Symphony Orchestra's anniversary events, firstly for his role as co-adjudicator and presenter of prizes for the Chapel's Fanfare contest and later in acknowledgement as the founder of the orchestra which launched the city's Symphony Orchestra. The Orchestra's anniversary comprised a series of four 'Cathedral Concerts' which took place in Christchurch Cathedral. In recognition of Ritchie's contribution, he was asked to select one work for each of the four programmes. In addition, the fourth and final concert in October was a near replication of the John Ritchie String Orchestra's first programme. Ritchie's arrangement of *Turkey in the Straw*, which was played as the encore for the 1959 first concert, was the final work presented.⁴⁷⁹

The Orchestra's first 'Lamb and Hayward Masterworks Series' concert for 2008 on 28 February fittingly opened with a newly commissioned Ritchie work for the occasion, *Birthday Fanfare* for Brass and Orchestra, and was followed by one of the orchestra's standard repertoire, Lilburn's *Aotearoa*. Coinciding with the Orchestra's June anniversary concert, which was opened by the then Prime Minister Helen Clark, was the release of Simon Tipping and Tom Roger's book *Classical Sparks*, a history of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra. It would be fair to say that Ritchie was rather disappointed with both the book and the celebration generally.

Let the Doves of Peace Fly which was composed in 2008 was featured in the 2010 Christchurch Anzac Day Dawn Service. The song was a setting of a translated poem by Safet Kafedzic, the second piece Ritchie composed using Kafedzic's

⁴⁷⁹ Ritchie papers, Programmes. Loose newspaper cutting: 'the orchestra will play in its entirety the first full concert performed by the original string orchestra' (*Press*, D1, 21 November 2007). The programme states: 'Many of the works in this afternoon's programme were played in the first John Ritchie String Orchestra concert in 1958'.

words.⁴⁸⁰ The service took place at Christchurch Cathedral, and although not known at the time was to be the last at the venue – at least for many years – due to the 2010 to 2011 Christchurch earthquakes and the longstanding debate as to its restoration or demise. The song was performed by the Burnside High School Male Voice Chorus conducted by Chris Bruerton, who was a music teacher at the school. Ritchie thought highly of Bruerton's abilities and had written a letter of appreciation to Bruerton following his performance in *Gallipoli* noting: 'You have a real talent supported by a lively intelligence'.⁴⁸¹ He later approached him to ask if he had a small group who could perform *Let the Doves of Peace Fly* for Achmed Kafedzic.⁴⁸² Indeed, Ritchie's favourable opinion of Bruerton was justified; in 2012 Bruerton was accepted into 'The King's Singers', an esteemed British based male vocal sextet which records, conducts workshops and performs around the world.

Probably few if any, and certainly not Ritchie himself, would have foreseen his longevity. He had enjoyed life's pleasures, often to excess, and his long working hours, late nights composing or drinking with friends, and the onset of heart disease in the 1970s would have stilled many other less robust individuals. While he adhered to taking his prescribed medication, he continued to ignore his doctor's advice to abstain until the negative effects on his health were simply too obvious to ignore by which time he was over ninety. Still, a pacemaker, and medical and family care kept his heart ticking, and his generally buoyant attitude and wide circle of friends and interests meant he retained an enthusiasm for life.

Thus, Ritchie's ninetieth year was also the impetus for a number of events and awards for him. The Woolston Brass presented him with a certificate of thanks to acknowledge his fifty year association and for his singular contribution as the band's Patron from 1988 to 2011. He was Radio New Zealand's 'Composer of the week' beginning Monday 25 September. This opened with an interview with

⁴⁸⁰ The first was *Cedah Te Da Dodjes* (I was waiting for you) composed in December, 1997.

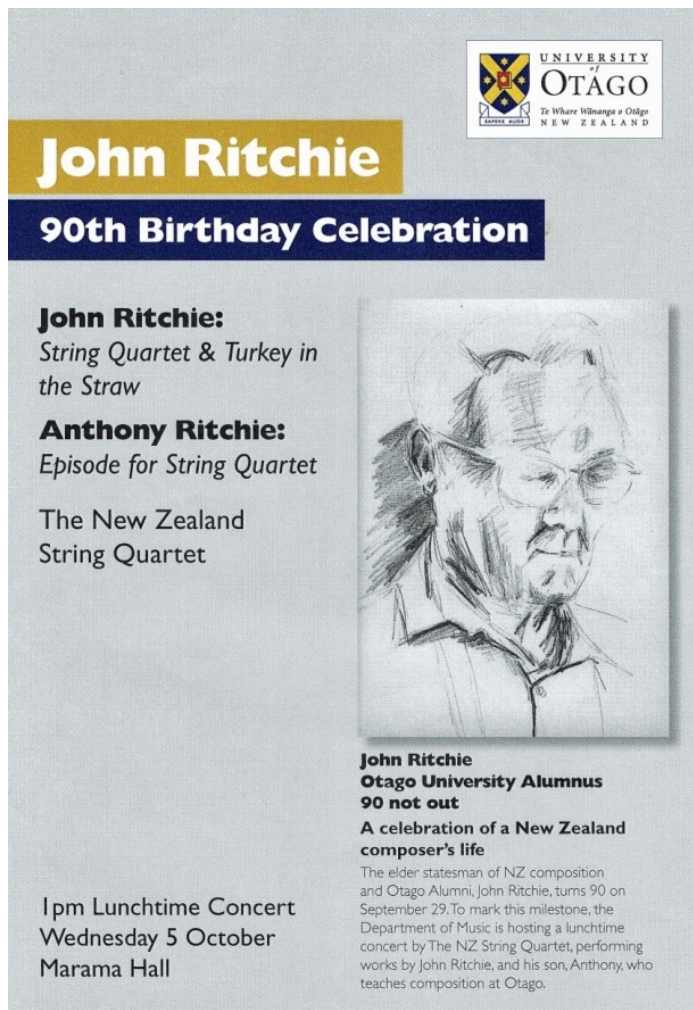
⁴⁸¹ Ritchie papers, Personal Documents folder, copy of letter from Ritchie to Bruerton, 14 May 2007.

⁴⁸² Ritchie papers, Personal Documents folder, copy of letter from Ritchie to Bruerton, 17 June 2008.

Ritchie, hosted by composer and musicologist Philip Norman, who engaged with him to talk over aspects of his composing and performing life, and on reaching an advanced age. Over the remainder of the week listeners were afforded airings of many of Ritchie's works covering a wide range: *Suite No. 1 for String Orchestra*, *Aquarius: Suite No. 2 for String Orchestra*, *Turkey in the Straw*, *Clarinet Concertino*, *Papanui Road*, *Partita for Brass Quintet*, *Threnody*, *Gallipoli Voices*, *The Snow Goose*, *Three Caricatures*, *Three Whimsies*, *Pisces*, and choral works *Lord, when the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace*, *Canary Wine*, *Dominus Firmamentum: The Lord is My Rock*, *Winter and Rough Weather*, *Missa in Sanctissimi*, and *Zhivago's Mary Magdalene Songs*. Notably, Philip Norman also compiled and edited *John Ritchie at Ninety: a Festschrift*. This celebratory publication of Ritchie's life contains tributes from a spectrum of people associated with Ritchie over his lifetime including family, friends, and colleagues, together with interview transcripts and a list of works. A large gathering, which included many of the contributors, was held nearby at The Brewers Arms, a bar and restaurant on Papanui Road, where Ritchie was a regular patron.

On the afternoon of 5 October 2011 the New Zealand String Quartet presented 'John Ritchie 90th Birthday Celebration' in Marama Hall, Otago University, Dunedin. Opening with *Episode for String Quartet*, a specially composed work for the event by Anthony Ritchie and dedicated to his father, the quartet performed two of Ritchie's works – his recently revised *String Quartet* (1962, rev. 2004) and a recent arrangement by Anthony Ritchie of *Turkey in the Straw*. The revisions of the quartet included some amendments to the first and second movement but more significantly the creation of a new fourth movement in place of the original. The work was initially composed with the idea of a resident quartet at Canterbury in mind although at the time Ritchie did not promote the work, in part because the quartet had its own repertoire, but more importantly because Ritchie had never been convinced of the success of the last and fourth movement. Ritchie had reused existing material; a restatement of the last movement of his first suite for strings transposed up a fifth. Ritchie believed that principally this was where the main issue lay; it simply did not work for a string quartet. As stated, a review of the piece after its first performance in the States by

the Alard Quartet, while generally complimentary, also exposed perceived weaknesses of this movement, especially its opening.



The leaflet features a grey background with a yellow banner at the top left containing the name 'John Ritchie' in white. Below this is a dark blue banner with '90th Birthday Celebration' in white. In the top right corner is the University of Otago logo, which includes a crest and the text 'UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO', 'Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtago', and 'NEW ZEALAND'. To the left of a central portrait sketch, the text lists the performers: 'John Ritchie: String Quartet & Turkey in the Straw' and 'Anthony Ritchie: Episode for String Quartet', followed by 'The New Zealand String Quartet'. The central portrait is a pencil sketch of an elderly man with glasses. To the right of the sketch, text identifies him as 'John Ritchie Otago University Alumnus 90 not out' and describes the event as 'A celebration of a New Zealand composer's life'. A paragraph below this provides context: 'The elder statesman of NZ composition and Otago Alumni, John Ritchie, turns 90 on September 29. To mark this milestone, the Department of Music is hosting a lunchtime concert by The NZ String Quartet, performing works by John Ritchie, and his son, Anthony, who teaches composition at Otago.' At the bottom left, the event details are listed: '1pm Lunchtime Concert', 'Wednesday 5 October', and 'Marama Hall'.

John Ritchie
90th Birthday Celebration

John Ritchie:
String Quartet & Turkey in the Straw

Anthony Ritchie:
Episode for String Quartet

The New Zealand String Quartet

John Ritchie
Otago University Alumnus
90 not out

A celebration of a New Zealand composer's life

The elder statesman of NZ composition and Otago Alumni, John Ritchie, turns 90 on September 29. To mark this milestone, the Department of Music is hosting a lunchtime concert by The NZ String Quartet, performing works by John Ritchie, and his son, Anthony, who teaches composition at Otago.

1pm Lunchtime Concert
Wednesday 5 October
Marama Hall

Figure 83: Leaflet for Ritchie's 90th Birthday Celebration, Marama Hall, Dunedin, 5 October 2011. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

It was interesting to hear Ritchie discuss the work in 2010 in relation to its completion and the autobiographical titles of the four movements. This may have been a retrospective view but not, on reflection, unconnected to aspects of the work at the time of its original composition (1958-1962), and when the final movement was composed near the end of his life. Ritchie included an adaptation of the tune *I know where I'm going* (arranged by Herbert Hughes) which Anita had sung as a folk song in her twenties and which featured in a romance film (1945) of the same name that Anita and Ritchie had attended together. The work was also written at a time that Ritchie, at the height of his career with the

establishment of the John Ritchie String Orchestra in 1958 and his appointment as Professor and Head of Music at Canterbury in 1962, was undeniably busy, and the apex perhaps, of his working life. Hence, the correlation between the movement's titles *Childhood, Young's Love, Life's Work and Reminiscence* and musical content is explained.

Elizabeth Bouman's review which followed the next day was somewhat mixed and interestingly, she was not completely convinced of the fourth movement until its final resolution which revealed the purpose of the 'slow dissonant deliberation'. Bouman noted however that the four contrasting movements were 'quite lyrical at times, with constant modal tonality surprises' but thought that listeners may have found the fourth movement 'dreary or intensely contemplative' which was only relieved towards the end as the 'intriguing final cadential harmony and a long unison fade-out revealed the deliberate poignant dedication to a loved one's enduring pain and suffering before life's end in total peace'. The difficulties for the listener may of course have improved on further hearings. Alternatively there could have been some differences in style between the first three and last movements, perhaps because of the lapse in time between the writing or the revisionary process which was undertaken jointly by Anthony and Ritchie. Notwithstanding, however a listener may interpret the final movement, it certainly seemed to have had deep, autobiographical significance for Ritchie.

Ritchie's extensive contribution to Canterbury University was not forgotten either as the Vice-Chancellor, Rod Carr acknowledged in a personal letter dated 1 September 2011. In this, warmest wishes were extended to Ritchie and his forty year service to the University as lecturer, chair, composer, musical leadership, and the various roles in university administration including service as Deputy Vice-Chancellor, were recognised as a debt to the University. Carr also noted that the University Council, in appreciation of Ritchie, had awarded him the title of emeritus professor and conferment of an honorary Doctorate of Music in 2000. This seemed a rather odd statement to make, at least the way it was worded, in that it read as though Carr was talking about Ritchie rather than to him. This may be because Carr had little personal experience with Ritchie, and indeed the most

recent was around the music department's proposed shift to the Arts Centre on which they disagreed. Carr then named a large contingent of graduates who had benefited from Ritchie's time on the staff at the University and who went on to become pianists, composers, music administrators, educators, performers and conductors, as well as academics. Special events which Ritchie had significantly contributed to were also acknowledged such as the 1974 Commonwealth Games and the University's Centenary. Finally, mention was made that Ritchie's *Organ Fanfare* was still performed at the beginning of each graduation ceremony and *Recessional* too was often performed.



Figure 84: Doctor of Music Honorary Degree from the University of Canterbury certificate. Used with permission of the Ritchie family.

In these later years Ritchie continued to be offered occasional speaking engagements for various organisations such as 'The University of the Third Age U3A Okeover Group' on the University's Ilam campus in October 2010 and the Russley Probus Club in January 2011 which took place at the Russley Golf Club rooms. Ritchie's U3A presentation was the second of five in a course entitled 'My Life and Music' with Maurice Till, Malvina Major, Graham Hollobon, and

Don and Beris Whelan completing the grouping.⁴⁸³ As with all of his presentations, Ritchie was well-prepared with content aimed at the specific audience, using stories and humour interspersed with musical examples in his delivery to engage listeners. Organiser of the event and attendee at Okeover, past University Council member and Chancellor, Dame Phyllis Guthardt, wrote to Ritchie in appreciation of his talk: ‘A delightful morning [...]. [I] enjoyed it immensely [...], such a rich morning of story, music and insight into your life [...]. It could have gone on for several more hours in my book!’⁴⁸⁴

Ritchie might well have repeated the same talk for Russley Probus but again preferred to tailor it for the specific group. He included light-hearted – but probably truthful – references to his time spent training in the Fleet Air Arm in England such as: ‘leave was more interesting than the war’; ‘parties were the order of the day’; and on meeting Malcom Arnold who was playing trumpet in the band at the Royal College of Music Ball at the Albert Hall and learning of the three weeks difference in their ages declared that ‘we were almost twins’. He recounted another occasion when revellers scattered on hearing an air raid siren: ‘I met author Lesley Charteris [of *The Saint* fame] under the Grand Piano’. Finally, to end, a snippet from *Papanui Road* and a dig at Canterbury’s plan to rehouse the Music Department on the Art Centre site: ‘I return to the fray when I see my old university making a fool of itself [...]. We all know that student welfare is uppermost. Music students need the whole campus in which to breathe’.⁴⁸⁵

In fact I took Ritchie to these two events and was able to observe him first-hand while he engaged with the public from the podium, and informally afterwards. He was exactly as participants described – patient, genial and genuine in his demeanour – and as I too had experienced. As stated, between the latter part of 2006 and early 2007, Ritchie and I, along with my husband and daughter, became nodding acquaintances at a café situated next door to the Christchurch central

⁴⁸³ Ritchie papers, Personal Documents. Programme for Term 3, 2010.

⁴⁸⁴ Ritchie papers, Personal documents, letter, 18 October, 2010.

⁴⁸⁵ Ritchie papers, Personal Documents, Talks file box; John A Ritchie, ‘About Me, My Life, Profession, Friends: Born into a NZ Economically Depressed’.

library. Ritchie's amiable manner and genuine interest in my studies and musical endeavours piqued my interest in his life and music. I had not previously considered doctoral research but the opportunity to investigate the life of a well-known New Zealand musical figure first-hand was too significant to ignore.

Ritchie received my suggestion of a life study with genuine pleasure and wanted to assist in any way possible. My interest in interviewing as a means of getting to know Ritchie the man, as well as what he had achieved, was met with full approval, and even apparent pleasure. We began what were to become regular meetings at Ritchie's home. The first of these took place in early April of 2007. I presented Ritchie with a list of topics which had been suggested to me as a starting point for the research by Brian Pritchard. While Ritchie talked, I wrote his response verbatim to each query, a skill I had acquired attending lectures for my undergraduate degree. I realised however that writing was an impediment to the less structured interviewing style I wished to engage in and immediately researched and subsequently purchased a recording device for future meetings. Although the path to enrolment did not go as smoothly as anticipated, Ritchie was more than happy to meet approximately weekly for recorded interviews during this early process. The interviews continued regularly, particularly over the following three years, and became a ritual where coffee and chocolate biscuits were enjoyed. We sat in Ritchie's sitting room, a small table placed between us for the coffee and on which the recording device was placed, as Ritchie looked back and talked over his life.

It became apparent that my proposal for the study was well timed. The family, in much the same way as second daughter, Jennifer, had done for Anita in 2001, had begun the process of collating material and conducted a few short interviews themselves. These interview transcripts outlined a brief summary of Ritchie's life and I was able to use this as a comparison for my own interviews. Sandy Garner's exceptional investigative work on the family tree was well-advanced and I was given access to the online records. At some point previously John Mansfield Thomson, too, had urged Ritchie to note down his recollections and anecdotes before it was too late.

Ritchie was certainly interested in his memoirs being written but while he wrote some notes, he had not been able to keep the momentum going. The introspection and solitude required did not give Ritchie any pleasure, and without another person to reflect back or prod for more information, the project stalled. Instead, the primary method which I brought to the study, in which Ritchie shared his recollections face to face with someone who showed genuine interest, and who was committed to in-depth research, was both gratifying and enjoyable. We travelled together on two occasions for the purposes of visiting and interviewing participants, and to take a retrospective journey of Ritchie's early life path which was enormously rewarding, I think, for both of us.



Figure 85: Ritchie and author at the Christchurch Bus Depot before departing for Dunedin, 8 February 2009. Photograph by Brent Johnson.

We visited schools, addresses and places where Ritchie had attended, lived or visited and spoke to strangers, friends and family along the way, some whom Ritchie had not communicated with for many a long while. In doing so, I strove to gain greater understanding of Ritchie and his life as told to me. That the study was protracted due to my own personal issues is unfortunate since Ritchie did not see the results of our collaboration. Always the gentleman, he never once reproached me for this; however regardless of the unfinished state of the research when he

died, I am confident he was satisfied that he had passed on to me as much detail as he could remember or was willing to give. Having done that, his part was completed and he was very happy to leave any further researching, analysing and writing up to me. In the end he accepted that with failing eyesight and body, his time for creating was done.

Conclusion

Ritchie's works have been published, performed, recorded, and broadcast on radio in New Zealand and abroad. Nevertheless composing was just one of several musical activities which he was engaged in. Ritchie's distinct set of circumstances wrought a path to a rich musical life that could not have been imagined at the time of his birth. Developing out of his academic position at the University of Canterbury he became involved in a range of activities including administration, performance and education. Throughout his working life Ritchie was at the heart of many of Christchurch's music events both within academia and in the local community and beyond. He exhibited remarkable resilience over the course of his life experiences which was fundamental to his success. He was generous with his knowledge and time in offering support to other musicians and enjoyed their accomplishments. His carefully written testimonials provided to numerous individuals in support of academic and other positions, awards, and competitions attest to his patronage.⁴⁸⁶ Ritchie's life story shows a man who was able to turn obstacles into opportunities, and whose own achievements affected many he came into contact with in his various roles.

From the time of his employment at Canterbury University in 1946, later confirmed as Junior Lecturer from February 1947, Ritchie's academic career flourished. In 1949 he was elevated to the position of lecturer followed three years later by a promotion to senior lecturer. In 1952 he was Acting Head of Music while Professor of Music, Vernon Griffiths, was in England and in 1962 he succeeded Griffiths as Professor and Head of Music. Partly fuelled by a desire to

⁴⁸⁶ Ritchie papers, Testimonials folders in cartons. Copies retained and stored alphabetically.

provide well for his enlarging family, his drive for success led to his involvement in an increasing number of administration roles within the university. He was Vice-Chancellor Neville Phillips's choice of deputy and assumed leadership during Phillips's absence, a role which he undertook more frequently as Phillips suffered ill health in 1976. As Acting Vice-Chancellor, Ritchie made an unsuccessful application for the Vice-Chancellor's position which had been vacated by Phillips in 1977. Phillips' successor, Professor Bert Brownlie, was quick to name Ritchie as his deputy, a familiar role which he fulfilled for a further three years.

Ritchie stands as the University of Canterbury Music Department's longest serving Professor of Music. His total of thirty-nine years' service to the University equals that of Dr John C. Bradshaw whose appointment as lecturer in music in 1902 also marked a significant period in the music department's development. Beginning his career at the university at a pivotal time in post-war New Zealand, Ritchie's involvement with music in Christchurch was both extensive and influential. The university was at the time literally and figuratively the intellectual and cultural centre of the city and the music department played a crucial part in drawing music to the people and the people to music.

From the time of his appointment at the university, Ritchie also became actively involved in music-making in the wider community. He accepted invitations to adjudicate competitions, he reviewed local performances for the *Christchurch Press*, conducted the *Liederkränzchen* and the *Railway Workshops Choir* and in 1958 formed the John Ritchie String Orchestra (JRSO) which he conducted and directed until 1967. During this period of directorship Ritchie was engaged in the selection of players for the orchestra, made decisions regarding programming and performances, and was instrumental in augmenting the orchestra with wind and brass, allowing expansion of repertoire and greater playing opportunities. The formation and development of the John Ritchie String Orchestra ultimately led to the provision of a symphony orchestra for the city of Christchurch, the present Christchurch Symphony Orchestra.

Ritchie's administrative skills were utilised both within academia and by organisations external to the university. His university roles involved membership, often in a leading capacity, of various committees: Tutorial Class, Orientation, Regional Syllabus, Standing (later Academic Administration), and Research and Leave Committees. Other appointments included two terms as Dean of Music and Fine Arts (1964-1967 and 1970-1973); member of the University Council and its Academic Committee (1973-1976); Deputy Chairman of the Professorial Board (hence Deputy Vice-Chancellor) (1973-1980) and, as stated, Acting Vice-Chancellor for various periods between 1973 and 1980.

Ritchie regularly attended the International Society for Music Education conferences and maintained regular contact with affiliates from around the globe, discussing, publishing and advancing the cause of music education. He was a board member and the Chair of Music in General Schools, Music in Schools and Teacher Education for the organisation from 1974 to 1976 and was at that time appointed Secretary-General, a role he held until 1984. A board member once more from 1986 to 1988, Ritchie was the elected President for a term from 1990 to 1992 and in 1994 he was awarded honorary life membership. He was appointed to the committee of the Australasian Performing and Recording Right Association (APRA) Music Committee in 1977, much to the annoyance of Douglas Lilburn who, having resigned his position on the board, voiced his opinion that it was now time for one of the younger composers to lead the organisation into a new direction.⁴⁸⁷ Nonetheless 'the Professor's' contribution as an experienced administrator who persevered with dogged determination, and whose composure provided an excellent foil to Chairman Ashley Heenan's irascible nature, reaped rewards for New Zealand musicians.⁴⁸⁸

In the late 1970s the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council appointed Ritchie as chairman of a committee whose task was to 'Study the Needs of Music Teaching in New Zealand'. Dubbed the 'Ritchie Report' after the committee's findings

⁴⁸⁷ Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music*, p. 277.

⁴⁸⁸ Ray Columbus, *Interview with Julie Johnson* (Christchurch: 24 October 2010). Recording and transcript retained by the author.

were released in June 1980, the forty-seven page document includes a survey and examination of the then current music teaching and learning experiences in New Zealand along with recommendations to improve and enhance music teaching practices for both students and educators (see Appendix H). The committee spent a significant time researching and collecting data from a variety of sources before collating and producing the comprehensive findings but as time went by there was increasing frustration at the lack of action surrounding the report. In November 1983 Labour Member of Parliament for Western Hutt, John Terris, asked of the Minister of Education: 'What consideration has he given to the implementation of the recommendations of the Ritchie report on music teaching?'. The Honourable M. L. Wellington replied:

Teachers of music throughout New Zealand, and, more recently, at the August 1983 National Music Education Conference, have taken part in discussions on the report. Officers of my department have also been assessing the implications of the recommendations. Given other claims to additional expenditure, I have not, however, been able to give priority to the recommendations.⁴⁸⁹

It was incredibly disappointing to all interested parties that ultimately none of the recommendations were implemented, seemingly due to an unwillingness to allocate the funds needed to progress any of the proposals. Nonetheless the report has been regularly referred to, including as recently as 2017 in the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) 'Guidelines for school leaders, Head of Departments of Music and Itinerant Teachers of Music'. Susan Braadvedt's 2004 thesis from the University of Canterbury, 'A History of Music Education in New Zealand State Primary and Intermediate Schools 1878-1989' also cites both the Ritchie and the earlier Tait report several times in Chapter 6: Department of Education Initiatives.

⁴⁸⁹ 'Parliamentary Debates (Hansard): Second Session, Fortieth Parliament, 1983', *House of Representatives*, 455, pp. 4593-594, retrieved from <<https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=iHErAQAAIAAJ>> [accessed 20 July 2019].

Ritchie's leadership skills were not limited to musical activities in Christchurch or centred solely on music events and organisations. His invitations to judge music competitions came from throughout New Zealand; he took the Addington Workshops Choir to the wider Canterbury area and travelled with them as far south as Dunedin and to the Buller district for performances; he attended and lectured at adult education music schools held in various parts of the country including Ashburton, Timaru, Buller, Nelson and Wanganui; and he toured with the John Ritchie String Orchestra around the South Island in 1962 and 1963. In his capacity as a touring organiser he exposed both new music to audiences and music to new audiences – those in smaller communities whose opportunity to see and hear live orchestral music was limited – and was astute in his programming, including popular and familiar tunes alongside traditional classical music which ensured the music was relatable to all. An experienced musical director he was, on several occasions, guest conductor for selected National Orchestra recording sessions.

He presented lectures and talks on music for local fraternities such as the Workers' Education Association (WEA), and New Zealand's National Airways Corporation commissioned him to write a series of in-flight talks which were recorded and transmitted to travelling passengers as entertainment. In 1952 he was contracted by the *Press* to write a series of book reviews which included both music and non-music related publications and he continued as a regular critic of local music performances. However, by 1967 he had relinquished control over the John Ritchie String Orchestra, and his university schedule along with his administration duties limited his ability to continue the type of community music making he had previously been involved in.

Notwithstanding the many and varied positions Ritchie was employed in, he continued to compose throughout his university career and beyond. From his early solo voice songs with piano accompaniment produced while still a student at King Edward Technical College (KETC), he quickly extended his knowledge and skill of composing to encompass a comprehensive spectrum of arrangements. His output of approximately two hundred and seventy works includes such musical

scorings as choral, chamber, brass, guitar, solo instruments and orchestral. Many of his choral pieces became standard repertoire in New Zealand as well as being performed in Australia, America and England. His best known work *Concertino for Clarinet and Orchestra* (1958) is regularly broadcast here and in America. Several of his works have been published including the Clarinet Concertino, *String Quartet* (1962, rev. 2002), *Papanui Road* (1987), *The Zhivago Songs* (1977) and his arrangement of *Turkey in the Straw* (1958) for string orchestra.

Many benefited from Ritchie's endeavours as a teacher, composer, conductor, leader, and administrator as spoken of by participants and illustrated throughout this study. Ritchie's specialised skills are just one aspect which impacted on those around him; his personal attributes too of fairness, generosity, encouragement and approachability played a significant part in influencing the confidence and loyalty of others. It would be specious however to represent Ritchie as a man of saintly character – neither would he want that – since he had the capacity to experience the spectrum of human emotions and respond accordingly. In order to present a balanced view it is worth noting that some paradoxes were evident during the course of the study; Ritchie was generous with his time and advice but there were limits to his patience and he could be acerbic when irritated. He exhibited modesty yet was vexed by a lack of perceived acknowledgement of his works and himself as a composer; his genial nature in the social world was not always matched in his family life and indeed time for both recreational activities and career usually took precedence over home-life.

Ritchie himself conceded that he was a rather pompous and aloof young man particularly when employed by Griffiths at King Edward Technical College as a senior music student. This is somewhat at odds with Clare Peach's recollections who, although not a day student at the school, observed him in his assistant conducting role at the college and beyond. Peach thought him a gifted musician who worked tirelessly, who carried out his duties with professionalism and who was worthy of the position which Griffiths had bestowed on him. Nevertheless, it would not be surprising for Ritchie to have assumed a modicum of arrogance as a

result of his elevated status and the regard which Griffiths accorded him at that time.

Ritchie's life is an absorbing portrayal of how the circumstances of his birth and childhood, and events occurring in his formative years shaped his future ultimately leading to a successful, fulfilled life which enriched and affected many in the community. Ritchie had an optimistic outlook from a young age that saw him take advantage of opportunities and gain positive experiences in life which in turn increased his confidence and well-being. He showed remarkable resilience when his mother departed for England and a few years after that when his father died. He maintained his composure as he was placed with two relatives' families within a short time before being settled with a third at age thirteen, all of whom were strangers. His early living conditions were modest and there was a lack of attachment to his relations; nonetheless he strove to be quiet and well-behaved, and attended diligently to his schoolwork. He was quite competitive in this respect and was disappointed and surprised that he did not achieve top in his class at the end of his Form II year at Arthur Street School, Dunedin, made more difficult by the fact that his cousin was one of two pupils ahead of him. He was not long depressed by this and instead was spurred on to work harder.

This determination to succeed coincided with Ritchie's entry to King Edward Technical College and it was his concerted efforts coupled with an innate musical ability which, within just one year, drew Griffiths's attention to him. Ritchie's interest and success in music grew as a consequence of Griffiths's acknowledgement of his abilities but this would have come to nothing without the music master's intervention at a critical time, that when Ritchie was directed to attend job interviews towards the end of his second college year. There is ample evidence of Griffiths's charity which, as previously stated, was borne of a social conscience and selflessness. In all probability it was Griffiths who arranged for Ritchie to be engaged as music librarian at the College, and later as an assistant to oversee and conduct music rehearsals, while monies were paid directly to Ritchie's aunt and uncle for his support. It is also possible that a proportion of these funds came directly from Griffiths. Thus, Ritchie continued his schooling to

matriculation and on to university study and teacher training from which he received a studentship that provided him with financial independence. During his formative years, Ritchie not only benefitted from Griffiths's goodwill; he witnessed similar benefaction to others and experienced and observed the consequences of it. Additionally, Griffiths provided a powerful role model as mentor to his music students, especially the group who attended his evening theory classes. This was particularly so in Ritchie's case for two reasons: Griffiths provided Ritchie's first and only early serious musical influence, and he fulfilled a parental role which was wanting in Ritchie's life.

The war years interrupted Ritchie's studies and his favoured activity, composition, in particular, but they also led a circuitous route to a full-time musical career in which composing and arranging played vital roles. Notwithstanding Griffiths's influence, Ritchie demonstrated independent thinking when he rejected Griffiths's suggestion of applying for the Christchurch Music School position on his arrival in Christchurch; instead he waited for a more appealing post which duly arrived in the form of music lecturer at Canterbury University College.

Ritchie's university position also arose from a recommendation by Griffiths; however Ritchie viewed it much more favourably than the first offer. The effects of his time in the armed services meant that the pragmatism by which he had originally approached teacher training, which was as a means of financial security rather than a vocation, had been replaced with antipathy. This difference in outlook was significant in that Ritchie was, at that time, aware of his responsibilities, yet driven by his new-found confidence and a desire for self-fulfilment. Ultimately he achieved this in his academic career and the activities which stemmed from it. While Griffiths and Ritchie may have differed in vocational preferences, the early and continuing influences from Griffiths can clearly be seen as Ritchie worked alongside him in the music department and beyond, guided by the principles which Griffiths held in relation to music and the community. Still, Ritchie maintained a distinct style as he progressed along his academic pathway and strengthened his musical skills, relinquishing his early

roles such as conductor of the Addington Workshops Choir to focus on new ventures including the founding of the John Ritchie String Orchestra.

Like Griffiths, Ritchie composed for community groups, the church and the ensembles which he directed. He too undertook commissions but his range broadened beyond the predominantly choral works which Griffiths favoured, although the thorough grounding Ritchie received from Griffiths's theory and composition classes are evident in Ritchie's writing. He produced one of New Zealand's best loved works with *Lord, when the Sense of Thy Sweet Grace*. Ritchie also showed independence in his musical development, furthering his compositional studies in America contrary to Griffiths's inclination that he should undertake educational research in England. Amongst the array of classes Ritchie attended in the States, he learnt of the twelve-tone technique and was broad-minded enough to try his hand at it. He discarded the resultant work and rejected the compositional style but not before he had considered its merits which, in his view, were negligible. With a firm musical basis and confidence to compose which arose from his training and relationship with Griffiths, and his own convictions, Ritchie was able to develop a distinctive style.

Ritchie was a highly intelligent man with drive and a will to achieve excellence in all his endeavours and subsequently enjoyed prominence in many areas of his working musical life. He was also a social and socially-minded man who retained strong links to and maintained a close relationship with many people and communities over the course of his life. Combining these two aspects required some juggling and it would be fair to say that in some instances his familial relationships suffered on the one hand and his creativity was stifled a little on the other as a consequence. Ritchie expressed some regrets on both these points as he talked over his life in old age, especially rueing time constraints which affected his ability to compose large-scale symphonic works. While this was mentioned on several occasions during the early interviews, this disappointment appeared to diminish over the course of the study as Ritchie reflected on his life in its entirety, and particularly as his retrospective biographical work, *The String Quartet*, was finally completed. Revisions of this work, which included the rewriting of the

fourth movement, were jointly undertaken by Ritchie and son, Anthony Ritchie, who also arranged its performance in Dunedin by the New Zealand String Quartet. This father and son collaboration culminating in the work's performance in Dunedin was a poignant and significant final statement. In the final analysis, Ritchie accepted the payoff for the rich life he had enjoyed. Additionally, Ritchie was exceedingly grateful for his family; the opportunity post-retirement to make amends to Anita for his many absences and distractions; the time to appreciate the successes of all his children; he was immensely thankful for the time his family afforded him; and he enjoyed great pleasure from his extended family in later years, all of whom he obviously loved deeply.

In musical terms, possibilities for further research have also been revealed. Each area of Ritchie's expertise comprising administration, education and conducting could be further explored either as a case study or as part of a broader examination of the topic. An inquiry which compares Ritchie's style with other New Zealand or similar age composers of Western art music might also be conducted, and a review devoted entirely to his vocal works would bring into prominence his compositions which many people in the community continue to value and perform. Additionally there is readily available material related to programmes, performance, and recordings which could be more fully scrutinised and evaluated with a view to generating a reception history of his compositions. Lastly, a series of detailed harmonic and structural analyses of a representative selection of Ritchie's compositions would complement this biographical study.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics approval

Julie Johnson
Dr William Dart
Martin Lodge

30 June 2008

Dear Julie

Application for Ethical Approval: **A study of the life and compositions of Professor Emeritus John Ritchie**

Thank you for resubmitting an Application for Ethical Approval to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. One member of the committee and I have studied your resubmitted application and we are very happy to be able to give you approval to go ahead with the project.

We do think it would be a good idea to say both in the description of the research and in the first two paragraphs of the letter to potential participants that you have John Ritchie's support for your project.

We wish you all the best with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Walker,
Acting Chair, FASS Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B: Participant letter

Date

Participants name
address.

Julie Johnson
64A Bentley Street,
Russley,
Christchurch 8042.
Tel: (03) 342 3643
Mobile: 027 3228987
Email: julieai@nettel.net.nz

Dear Participant,

I am researching the life and music of **Professor Emeritus John Ritchie**.

I am carrying out a critical evaluation of John Ritchie's life and his position within the development of New Zealand music. Professor Ritchie has given me permission to proceed with this project and a letter of support from him is enclosed. My aim is to establish the significance of his contribution to New Zealand music. The findings will form part of my PhD thesis at the University of Waikato.

I am contacting you as a possible person who may be able to assist me in my research. It has been suggested to me that you knew John Ritchie in the field [of/as a student, performer, colleague, friend, composer], and because of that association I would very much like to interview you from the point of giving contemporary observations and comments about John Ritchie.

As you may realise, there is not a great deal of literature about John Ritchie and therefore it is very important that I supplement this with as much information as is possible from those who have been connected with him at some stage of his life. I would greatly appreciate and value your participation in this research.

Should you be willing to participate, I would like to arrange a time to meet with you at your convenience and put a number of questions to you. In addition to your answers to these questions you will be invited to make other comments. I would also ask as to whether you have any memorabilia related to my topic as I am trying to establish an exact chronology of John Ritchie's compositions and their performances.

Possibly you may wish to think over your past associations with John Ritchie before you make a decision regarding participation. To confirm the situation, I shall contact you in approximately two weeks time. To give you an indication

of what is involved, I enclose questions that I wish to put to you together with the consent form which is to be signed prior to the interview.

I realise that this is going to intrude on your time. The interview will take approximately one hour to complete. I also realise that various memories may come back after an initial interview. If you wish, a further interview may take place at a suitable time. You are also most welcome to provide further recollections in written form.

To ensure accuracy and completeness, I would like to record the interview but only with your permission. You are welcome to ask any questions about the research and decline to answer any particular question put to you.

A transcript of your interview will be sent to you approximately one month following our meeting. You may then contact me if you would like to amend any part of the interview or withdraw any statements that you do not wish to be published. If possible this would be done within three months of receipt of the transcript; however you are welcome to contact me at any time if concerns arise subsequently.

As you may appreciate, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as a reader of the research may identify you as the origin of any particular comment made in the course of your interview. In addition, it would be beneficial for the purposes of my research for comments and views to be accurately attributed to their source. John Ritchie has himself expressed to me that it is his wish that participants feel able to be frank with their observations and comments.

All records and information provided will be stored in a locked studio at my home and kept confidential to myself and my supervisors. For your information, the names and contact details of my supervisors and the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Waikato are listed below.

Thank you for your time in reading this letter. I look forward to talking to you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Johnson

Supervisors' names and contact information:

Dr William Dart
 Music Department
 The University of Waikato
 Private Bag 3105
 Hamilton 3240
 New Zealand
 Email: wdart@waikato.ac.nz
 Ph: 07 838 4380
 Fax: 07 838 4683

Mr Martin Lodge
 Music Department
 The University of Waikato
 Private Bag 3105
 Hamilton 3240
 New Zealand
 Email: mlodge@waikato.ac.nz
 Ph: 07 838 4380
 Fax: 07 838 4683

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee:

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
 Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato,
 Te Whare Wananga o Waikato,
 Private Bag 3105,
 Hamilton 3240.
 Email: fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix C: Consent form

1

A Study of the Life and Compositions of Professor Emeritus John Ritchie

Consent Form for Participants

I, _____ (full name)

have read the letter outlining this study and my questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I may decline to answer any particular question in the study and that I may withdraw or amend material from my interview records.

I understand that my participation involves my being interviewed about John Ritchie's life and music and that any or all of the information may be used for furthering the completion of the interviewer's PhD thesis.

I understand that the researches and outcomes remain the intellectual property of the researcher. Material such as music (written or recorded), documents or letters that I supply to the researcher remains my property and may be used with acknowledgement.

I agree to provide information to the researcher under the conditions set out in the letter. I understand that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

I consent to my interview being audio recorded. YES/NO

I am happy to be identified in the published thesis. YES/NO

I would like a copy of my interview records sent to me. YES/NO

I would like my interview records returned to me following completion of the research. YES/NO

I would like my interview records to be archived for future research. YES/NO

On the basis of agreement with the institution I consent to my records being archived at:

I, _____ (full name)

hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Name of researcher

Date

Researcher's name and contact information:

Julie Johnson
64A Bentley Street
Russley
Christchurch 8042
New Zealand

Email: julieaj@nettel.net.nz
Ph: 03 342 3643
Mobile: 027 3228987

Supervisors' names and contact information:

Dr William Dart
Music Department
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240
New Zealand
Email: wdart@waikato.ac.nz
Ph: 07 838 4380
Fax: 07 838 4683

Mr Martin Lodge
Music Department
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240
New Zealand
Email: mlodge@waikato.ac.nz
Ph: 07 838 4380
Fax: 07 838 4683

Appendix D: John Ritchie's letter of endorsement

John Ritchie

Villa 2, 12 Mansfield Avenue
CHRISTCHURCH 8014
New Zealand

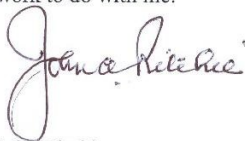
Phone: 355 4231
Fax: 355 4288
Prefixes: 0064 3 (from outside N.Z.)
03 (from outside Christchurch)

13 July 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

Concerning Julie Johnson

I trust her as a reliable researcher and recommend her to you without reservation. Julie Johnson, a first class graduate in Music, has my wholehearted support in her research work to do with me.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'John Ritchie', with a stylized, cursive script.

John Ritchie

Appendix E: John Ritchie's birth certificate

BD/A 107



NEW ZEALAND

Birth Certificate

No 459371

Office Kilbirnie

District No. 29

National No. 6562

CHILD

First/given name(s) John
Surname/family name Harrison

Sex M

Still-birth/Multiple birth
(if applicable)

Date of birth 29 September 1921

Place of birth Lyall Bay

Name changes -

MOTHER

First/given name(s) Jessie
Surname/family name Harrison

(If different First/given name(s) at birth -
from above) Surname/family name at birth -

Occupation, profession or job Not Recorded

Date of birth Age 24

Place of birth Dunedin

FATHER

First/given name(s) John
Surname/family name Ritchie

(If different First/given name(s) at birth -
from above) Surname/family name at birth -

Occupation, profession or job Mechanic

Date of birth Age 46

Place of birth Aberdeenshire Scotland

Certified to be a true copy of the above particulars included in an entry recorded in this office.

Issued under the seal of the Registrar at Lower Hutt
this 3

day of September 19 97



CAUTION: Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on the certificate, or (2) uses it as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution under the Crimes Act 1961.

3000/8/97—88192

Appendix F: Composition record book sample pages

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| INCIDENTAL MUSIC | 67 | Po Box 6315 | |
| PIANO SOLO | 72 | Auckland 1. | |
| CONCERTOS | 76 | JA RITCHIE'S APRA ID NUMBER | |
| CHAMBER MUSIC | 80 | 026 147 894 | |
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| <p><u>STRING ORCHESTRA</u></p> <p>1. PASSACAGLIA and FUGUE Feb 1950 for Piano and Strings [for Kathleen & Frank Callaway]</p> <p>2. INTERLUDE for Strings and Apr 1951 Piano - from Cantata: Then Laureth the Year.</p> <p>3. SUITE No 1 for STRING ORCHESTRA Allegro: Air: Intrada and Fugue Apr 1956 [for Alex Lindsay] 15 mins. 1st perf. 16/10/56 2VC A.L.O. (Alex Lindsay) 1st publ perf 4/4/59 National Arch (John Hopkins)</p> <p>4. RONDO for Strings with Piano June 1957 (for Elementary Grades)</p> <p>5. "TURKEY IN THE STRAW" Dec 1958 for String Orchestra (for the JSO)</p> <p>6. CAMEO from CAPELLERIA RUSTICANA arr. (Mascagni) Voilo Sapete, O Mamma Intermezzo Feb 1959 Fior di Giaggiolo for Soprano and Strings</p> | <p>7. THREE SONGS opus 13 (Samuel Barber) arranged for String Orchestra acc. Aug 1959</p> <p>8. MOCK MORRIS (Grainger) arranged for String Orchestra Aug 1959</p> <p>9. "STARDUST" Study for String Nov 1959 Orchestra, C2, Horn & Soprano</p> <p>10. Seven Accompaniments for Feb 1960 "Broadcasts to Schools" Booklet for AW & AH Reed</p> <p>11. FIORI MUSICALI (Frescobaldi) Mar 1960 arr. for String Orchestra. (Price Milburn 1979)</p> <p>12. SIX ACCOMPANIMENTS FOR SCHOOL Oct 1960 SINGING - for Strings [for NZBS]</p> <p>13. "TEA FOR TWO" arr for June 1961 Strings, Solo Violin & Solo Voice</p> |

PUBLICATIONS

1. UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE
Words: Shakespeare for High Voice
Publ - Augener, London 1950
2. THE LAMB
Words: Wm Blake for Unison Voice
Publ - Yearbook Press, London 1952
3. BE THOU HER KING
Words: for Solo or Unison singing
Publ - L.T. Watkins, Wellington 1953
4. TO DAFFODILS
Words: Wordsworth for Male Voice Choir
Publ - Joseph Williams, London, 1954
5. TWELVE NATIONAL AND TRADITIONAL SONGS arr. for Male Voice Choir
- with Vernon Griffiths
Publ - Novello, London, 1955
6. FULL FATHOM FIVE
Words: Shakespeare for Male Voice Choir
Publ - Novello, London, 1955

7. LORD, WHEN THE SENSE OF THY SWEET GRACE Words: Richard Crashaw
Publ - Novello, London 1957
Publ - Price Milburn, Wellington
8. SIX BRITISH FOLK SONGS
arr. for Choir [SAB] with Piano 1957
Publ - Novello, London
9. FIFTEEN ENGLISH HYMNS
arr. for Male Voice Choir 1960
Publ - Holy Cross College, Mosgiel
10. CONCERTINO FOR CLARINET AND STRING ORCHESTRA
Publ - Novello, London 1963
11. HOW FAR IS IT TO BETHLEHEM?
Words: Frances Chesterton - for treble voices (unison) and piano
Publ - Blandford Press, London, 1967
12. KYRIE AND GLORIA for CHORUS, STRING ORCHESTRA and TIMPANI 1968
Publ - WAI-TE-ATA Press, Wgton

ARTICLES ETC

1. MUSIC IN THE USA - three articles
for the Christchurch Press January 1957
4. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER
Music Educators Journal (Washington D.C.)
1958
5. THE PROFESSION OF MUSIC EDUCATION
Schools Publications [NZ Dept of Education]
1962
6. SOME THOUGHTS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL
MUSIC IN NEW ZEALAND
Education News (Auckland) Vol X no 2 1965
pp 18-19
7. THE PATTERN OF NEW ZEALAND CULTURE
Cornell University Press pp 209-238
ed. A.L. McLEOD 1968
Chapter titled "Music"

8. MUSIC IN NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION
The Australian Journal of Music Education,
Vol 4, pp 51-55 April 1969
9. BELA BARTOK - An assessment after
25 years. Talk, illustrated.
NZ Broadcasting Corporation July 1970
[incl. Concerto for Orchestra NZSO cond. J.R.]
10. MALCOLM ARNOLD - A talk and
performance to celebrate 50th birthday.
NZ Broadcasting Corporation Aug 1971
[incl. Symphony No 2 NZSO cond. John Ritchie]
11. BE YOURSELVES - 1974
Education Vol 23 No 4 pp 7-9
12. THE TRAINING OF THE PROFESSIONAL
MUSICIAN IN A COUNTRY WITH NO CONSERVAT-
ORUM
Paper for Unesco/ISME Seminar - Tokyo July 1974
Publ: ISME YEARBOOK Vol 2 1974 pp 48-52
ed. E. Kraus

Appendix G: Letter from Neville Phillips to Ritchie (Figure 74)

14 May 1973.

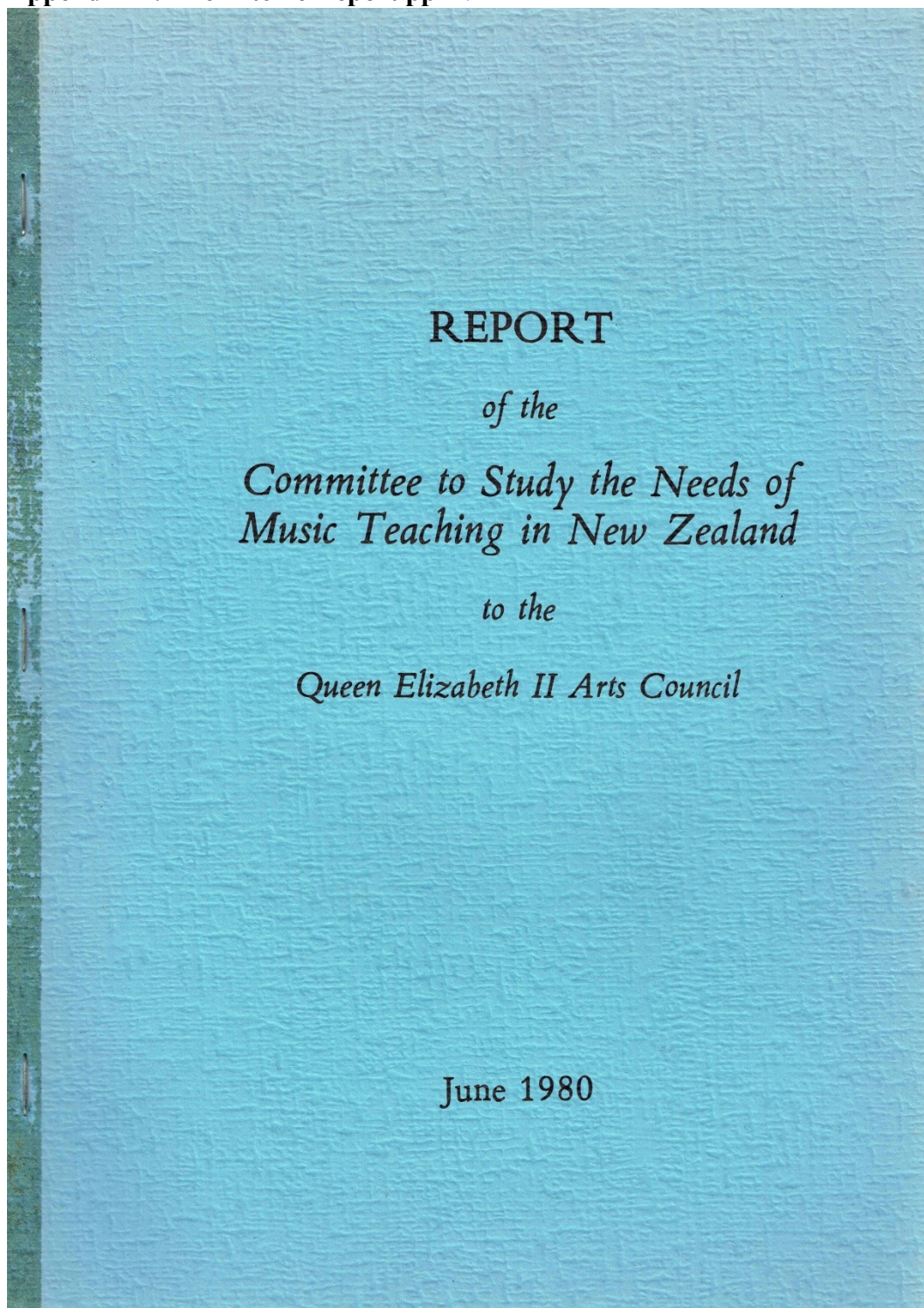
Dear John,

It was good of you to write about the centennial history. I cannot easily express my own sense of gratitude to the School of Music for the really major contribution it made to the success – and everyone thinks of it as a success – of the centennial exercise. One of the most rewarding aspects of the whole operation was the way in which various parts of the University pulled together, each in its own way, to show the University to the public of Christchurch as well as to our visitors.

As many of our guests have testified, the Centennial Concert was certainly one of the highlights, and for this outstanding event, as you well know, you share the credit with Bill Hawkey and other members of your staff as well as with your students. Please pass on to them my sincere thanks. Nor does one forget Graham Hollobon as organist and choir director for the Thanksgiving Service, where the music was of the highest standard and fully in keeping with the other aspects of that memorable and moving occasion. To Graham and the University Singers, my warm gratitude.

For the fanfares and above all the highly imaginative Ergo Tua Rura the debt is distinctly to you. If I thought the latter was magnificent both in composition and in execution – as I did and do – it may of course be due to the dedication, which did me a very great and ill-deserved honour, but I think not entirely or even mainly. Anyway, I was very proud indeed, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Sincerely yours,
Neville Phillips



MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Chairman

John A. Ritchie

Professor of Music, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Canterbury; Secretary General, International Society for Music Education.

Members

Russell Aitken

Assistant Director, Resources Division, Department of Education. (Convenor)

Judith Clark

Lecturer in Music, Victoria University of Wellington.

John Emeleus

Senior Lecturer, Music, Palmerston North Teachers College.

Ray Harris

Chartered Accountant; Registrar, The Music Teachers' Registration Board of New Zealand.

Ian le C. Harvey

Principal Lecturer, North Shore Teachers College; Government Nominee, Music Teachers' Registration Board; President Federation of Societies of Registered Music Teachers.

Guy E. Jansen

Education Officer, Music, Head Office, Department of Education.

Secretaries

Sue Keay

Tony White

- iii -

School of Music,
University of Canterbury,
CHRISTCHURCH 1.

16 June 1980

The Chairman,
Mr. Hamish Keith,
Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council,
P. O. Box 6040,
WELLINGTON.

Dear Mr. Keith,

I have the honour to present on behalf of my colleagues this Report based on Terms of Reference set down by your Council. Our sources of information have been widespread and, in addition to those made explicit in the Report, these have included individual teachers, music teachers' societies, college and school staffs and students. A variety of material was received in the form of letters and reports. Discussions and meetings have also taken place. The Committee wishes to acknowledge this essential help and, in so doing, I express its gratitude to a large number of individuals and variety of organizations, too numerous to specify, who have contributed information, advice and opinion.

The breadth of consultation was enhanced by a national survey conducted by the Research and Statistics Division of the Department of Education. It is described in Section 2 of the Report. We wish particularly to thank the staff of the Division for undertaking this work and for its co-operation throughout a long exercise.

Finally, I wish personally to thank the Committee, its secretaries and our typist for a long and hard job cheerfully done.

Yours sincerely,



J. A. Ritchie,
CHAIRMAN.

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